

Cellular phones should be allowed in schools

Key Terms

Prohibition
Crisis Preparedness
Disruption
Land line

Sources

Education World
http://www.education-world.com/a_issues/issues270.shtml
The Desert Sun: Schools May Allow Cellular Phones
<http://www.thedesertsun.com/news/stories2003/local/20030910021751.shtml>
MSN: Cell Phone Users More Polite
<http://www.msnbc.com/news/802842.asp?0si=-#BODY>

Fact Set

- The average U.S. cellular phone user uses 490 minutes of cellular time per month. Late in 2002, cellular phone use in the U.S. overtook the use of landline service.
- As of September 2003, it is estimated that one in three students aged 10 to 19 have a cellular phone.
- In a September 2003 poll taken by an online mobile retail company only 10 percent of respondents said it was acceptable to talk on a cellular phone while on school property, including classrooms.

Arguments in favor of allowing cellular phones

- Cellular phones are necessary for safety. Their use on September 11 demonstrates how helpful they are in allowing parents and students to contact each other in an emergency.
- The Columbine attacks and other instances of school violence show how helpful it might be to give students the ability to contact emergency personnel while at school.
- Schools can require that students turn off their cell phones during classes, but students would still have them for use in an emergency or to check messages in between classes.
- Cellular phones can be set to not ring during class, therefore minimizing the disruption to the learning environment. Regulating cellular phone usage would be better than banning them altogether.

Arguments against allowing cellular phones

- Cellular phones distract students and teachers by interrupting classes and disrupting the learning environment.
- Cellular phones have often been linked with the sale of drugs and other illegal behavior.
- Messages can be given to students by contacting the school. There is no need to reach them by cellular phone.
- In the event of an emergency, students should focus on following the instructions of school personnel, not using a cellular phone to contact their parents or other relatives. They will have the opportunity to contact their families once the emergency is over.
- The odds that a school will be the target of a terrorist attack are much lower than the odds that students will be distracted by using a cellular phone during class or during the school day.

Cellular phones should be allowed in schools

Key Terms

Prohibition
Crisis Preparedness
Disruption
Land line

Sources

Education World
http://www.education-world.com/a_issues/issues270.shtml
The Desert Sun: Schools May Allow Cellular Phones
<http://www.thedesertsun.com/news/stories2003/local/20030910021751.shtml>
MSN: Cell Phone Users More Polite
<http://www.msnbc.com/news/802842.asp?0si=-#BODY>

Fact Set

- The average U.S. cellular phone user uses 490 minutes of cellular time per month. Late in 2002, cellular phone use in the U.S. overtook the use of landline service.
- As of September 2003, it is estimated that one in three students aged 10 to 19 have a cellular phone.
- In a September 2003 poll taken by an online mobile retail company only 10 percent of respondents said it was acceptable to talk on a cellular phone while on school property, including classrooms.

Discussion Questions

- What aspects of students' private lives should be included during the school day?
- To what extent should students' rights be limited while they attend school?
- How much should students be trusted to follow guidelines about the use of technology, particularly when their actions might disrupt the learning environment of others?
- How does communication technology impact the types of equipment that students should be able to bring to school?