



BERWICK & DISTRICT SCHOOL

P.O. Box 40, 220 Veterans Drive, Berwick, NS B0P 1E0
Telephone: 902-538-4720 Fax: 902-538-4727
Berwick & District promotes a fragrance free and peanut aware school.



Principal: Bill Doucet

Vice Principal: Isaac Schurman

Friday, January 12, 2017

Dear Middle Level Families

On Thursday our staff and Constable Jeff Wilson of the RCMP met with our middle school students to talk about cell phones, personal privacy, online bullying and the responsible use of technology. Both Constable Wilson and I made presentations to the students on these topics. We have made some changes to the personal device / cell phone policy at the middle level. We have also tried to reinforce some of our existing rules. We want to communicate that to you so you are on board as well.

First we are establishing “No Phone Zones” around the building. Signs will indicate that students are in areas where phones and electronic devices are not permitted. These will include hallways, washrooms and locker rooms, the gym and some other areas around the building.

Secondly, we are reinforcing the rule that students are not permitted to take pictures or videos at school. This is, and has always been, the rule in AVRSB schools. It is often difficult for us to police this and we are working to educate our students about this rule and the reasons for it. As well, we have reinforced the fact that posting images from school online make the offence much worse and will result in much more serious consequences.

Thirdly, we talked to the students about the balance between responsible use of technology in the classroom, the distraction that personal devices can cause to all of us and the disruption devices can cause in the classroom. We had an open conversation about how all of us sometimes struggle with the addictive nature of personal technology and social media.

The biggest change that was made was the introduction of the “Phone Zone Stickers” which will be used in class. Each desk at the middle level will have a Phone Zone Sticker which will indicate where personal technology MUST be kept when it is in the classroom. Students will no longer be required to keep their devices in their lockers. Gym, music, tech and family studies classes will have device pouches to store devices which are brought to those classes.

It is important to note that we are NOT asking or requiring students to bring devices to class. While it is often very useful to have devices in class to look up information or use as writing devices, we will always provide devices to students who don't have them or choose to not bring them to class. As well, some teachers choose to use devices in the classroom and some do not. This will not necessarily change those practices. We are simply giving students the option to keep personal devices with them.



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We are also NOT telling students that they can't leave their devices in their lockers. They are more than welcome to leave any device they bring to school in their lockers.

Finally, we talked about the consequences of breaking the rules of using phones in No Phone Zones, using phones in classrooms without being given permission, taking pictures, etc. These consequences vary depending on the severity and frequency of the offence, but range from:

1. Asked by a teacher to put your phone away
2. Lose your phone until the end of the day
 - a) Phone goes to office
3. Lose your phone for the week. Parent comes to get the phone
(Photo or video at school starts at this level).
4. Lose phone for an extended period of time. Parent comes to get the phone.
5. Loss of Pit/Cafeteria privileges.
6. Suspension and loss of other school privileges.

If you have any questions about this or any other school matter please don't hesitate to call the school at 902-538-4720 or come in to see me personally.

As always, thank you for your support.

Bill Doucet
Principal
Berwick and District School