



THE ACADEMIES OF OKLAHOMA

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Cell Phone Policy

The Academies of Oklahoma (TAOK) is committed to providing an environment that fosters academic focus, student engagement, and social interaction. Research and practical experience show that personal electronic devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, and wireless earbuds can be a significant distraction in the classroom. Excessive or inappropriate device use contributes to lower academic performance, decreased face-to-face interaction, and increased incidents of cyberbullying and social anxiety.

This policy supports a cell-phone-free learning environment, encouraging students to be present, focused, and engaged throughout the school day. This policy is adopted in compliance with Oklahoma Statutes, Title 70, Section 1-126, as enacted by Senate Bill 139 (2025).

Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, all students enrolled in The Academies of Oklahoma public schools shall be prohibited from using cell phones, air pods/earbuds, smartwatches and personal electronic devices while on campus during the instructional day, defined as “bell to bell”—from the first bell signaling the start of instructional time to the final bell dismissing students at the end of the day.

Students are not allowed to have cellular devices at school at any time. With the exception of 11th and 12th who are going to school concurrently at a college or technology center or licensed drivers who drive to campus. The students must check their phone into the office upon arrival and will be allowed to pick the phone up at

3:30pm or when they leave campus for concurrent classes or technology center classes. If a student has a need to use their device to contact a parent or guardian, they may visit the office to speak with administration. Students that drive are encouraged to leave devices in their vehicles.

Definitions:

- Bell to bell: The time from the first instructional bell of the school day to the final dismissal bell.
- Personal electronic device: Any personal device capable of connecting to a smartphone, the Internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or another similar device.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Cell phones
- Smartwatches
- Smart headphones or earbuds
- Tablets
- Laptops
- Smart glasses

School-issued or school-approved devices specifically limited for classroom instruction are not included in this definition.

Exceptions

Approved exceptions to this policy include:

1. Emergency use: Students may use personal devices in an emergency situation as directed by school personnel.
2. Medical necessity: Students who rely on electronic devices for health monitoring (e.g., glucose monitors, seizure alerts) may use them as needed, subject to prior approval by school administration.
3. Instructional use with staff permission: Teachers may allow temporary use of devices for specific learning activities.

Infractions

Students found with a cell phone or unapproved device on school grounds will be reprimanded and the parent will retrieve the device from the administration office. No confiscated devices will be returned directly to the student.

For every subsequent offense, the device will be returned to the parent only from the administration office and the student will be assigned to Saturday school.