

**Cell phones as Learning Tools
at GHS?
You've GOT to be Kidding!**

While we recognize that current cell phone usage by our students has become a problem and an issue, I am encouraging you to rethink what we believe about students and cell phones. Cell phones are a powerful technological tool! With most cell phones that our students have at school every day they can:

- Make calls
- Text
- E-mail
- Connect with the internet
- Take pictures
- Make videos

While we all can quickly list many problems with each of these abilities in students hands....just think about the possibilities for learning! And the upside is that it costs us nothing....the students and parents are providing this technology to us for free! 😊

We are going to tighten our policy for cell phone usage outside of the classroom:

Any student who is observed texting, making calls, taking pictures or video or using a cell phone for any purpose without teacher permission and direction between the hours of 7:40 and 2:40 will have the cell phone taken by the teacher and turned into the office.

The cell phone will be kept by the administration for 7 days, or the student may pay a \$20 cash fine at the end of the day for the return of their phone.

I also strongly encourage all teachers to make it part of your classroom culture (and our school culture) to require students to lay their cell phones on their desks at the beginning of each class, whether you will be using their cell phones during instruction, or not. This will take away their ability to text in their hoodie pockets!

However, I want to **encourage** you to check out the following resources and learn, explore, and use your professional imaginations as to how students using cell phones as technology tools can enhance your teaching and student learning. Then please **share** with me and your colleagues what you are discovering and how you are allowing students to use cell phones in the classroom for learning purposes.

Good luck, and I can't wait to see what you and our students at GHS will do with cell phones as learning tools!

Linda

Internet Sites to Get you Started with Cell phones as Learning Tools:

- www.cellphonesinlearning.com : Home site of Liz Kolb, author of *Toys to Tools: Connecting Student Cell Phones to Education* (available Oct., 2008). Many articles concerning this issue, and many links to free internet sites to facilitate cell phones as learning tools. Best comprehensive site on this subject that I've seen. I highly recommend this site!
- <http://wiffitti.com> : live text messaging site
- www.polleverywhere.com : site developed by MIT that works like classroom performance systems (clickers). This is FREE for groups of 30 or less. Great for quick assessment of student learning and test reviews. The kids will love it!
- www.chacha.com : free site that allows you to call toll free (1-800-2chacha; 1-800-224-2242) and ask any question. They will text you back the answer. Try it!
- www.ireport.com and ireports on CNN.com: Mobile citizen journalism. Great for language arts classes.
- www.go.blogger.com : Free and easy site to set up a blog. The students would love classroom blogs!
- <http://gobcast.com> : Free podcasting - can post audio interviews, pictures, and videos on your classroom blogs
- <http://flickr.com> : Photo blogging
- www.myartspace.com : shared pictures, curriculum for teachers, and fieldtrips reflections from museums from across the world. Advertised as the premier art website of the world!
- <http://blip.tv> : video blogging
- <http://jott.com> : Speech to text blogging. Great for students with disabilities.
- <http://textmarks.com> : Text message alerts. Send messages to your students - homework or test reminders?
- www.takingitglobal.org : International site for shared education across the world.
- www.myhero.org : Biographies of thousands of people across time and cultures.
- www.learn.org : Site developed by two Canadian teachers who have linked their classes and school with other students and schools from across the world for shared learning.
- www.icue.com : NBC news site that offers free video of major news events. Great for making history come alive for students.