LAGUNITAS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Cell Phone/Smartwatch Policy: Lagunitas Community School

At the Lagunitas School, it is our responsibility to create a safe and productive learning environment for all students. To maintain a focused and communal atmosphere, we have established this cell phone/smartwatch policy. Please be aware that the school is not responsible for lost or stolen property including cell phones and smartwatches. If students have phones/smartwatches, **we prefer that they be kept at home if possible** unless there is a family or medical need.

Cell Phone/Smart Watch Use on Campus:

- Students will not have access to their phones/smartwatches during **school days while on campus from 8 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (2:15 p.m. on Wednesdays)** unless they are given permission by a teacher or administrator. **Students are allowed to contact their parents and guardians immediately after school dismissal.** If a student needs to bring a phone/smartwatch to school, they do so at their own risk.
    - Elementary Students must keep it turned off and in their backpack
    - Middle School Students must store it with their homeroom teacher
- If a parent needs to reach a student during school hours, they should call the office
    - Arielle- Upper Campus: (415) 488-4118 x301
    - Amy-Lower Campus (415) 488-4118 x203
- If a student needs to reach a parent during the school day or after school they should ask a teacher or visit the school office.

Student Responsibility:

- If a student brings their phone/smartwatch to campus, they must turn it off and leave it in their backpack (Elementary students) and with their homeroom teacher (Middle School students). If a student does not do this and they are found using their device on campus during the hours of **8 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.** the consequences are:
    - **1st time** - the device will be taken from the student and will be given back at the end of the school day.
    - **2nd time** - parent will be informed and the device will be taken from the student and may be picked up by a parent at the end of the school day.
    - **3rd time** - Student, parent, and administrator or teacher will meet to discuss a device management plan.

Respect for Others:

- When using cell phones under permissible circumstances, students should be mindful of their surroundings and the privacy of others.
- Taking photos, videos, audio recordings or giving out contact information without permission is disrespectful, invasive and prohibited.
- Participating in group chats outside of school hours must be respectful and should be monitored by parents/guardians.

Parental Involvement

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to support the school's cell phone/smartwatch policy by discussing appropriate cell phone usage with their child and monitoring their device activity.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping Lagunitas School maintain a productive atmosphere where every student can thrive.

The Epidemic of Lost Time – A Message from Wyatt O'Connell (Former 8th Grade Student @ LCS)

This is a message with information from one of our former 8th graders, Wyatt, whose change project challenges us to take a closer look at how screens are shaping childhood, and what we can do about it.

As part of his 8th grade Change Project, Wyatt's Ted talk, *The Epidemic of Lost Time*, explores the long-term impact of screen use on kids' mental health, development, and real-life connection. Watch Wyatt's Ted Talk here. He invites parents to rethink when and how kids are introduced to smartphones and to consider delaying smartphone use until 8th grade, as recommended by the **Wait Until 8th** campaign. San Geronimo Valley families can also choose to join PACT www.pactaction.org (Parent Alliance for Conscious Tech), a local group of parents supporting each other in navigating technology.

Why This Matters

- Teens average 9 hours of screen time per day, potentially losing years of real-life experience to digital distraction.
- Early smartphone use is linked to mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, and loss of self-esteem, especially among teen girls.
- Excessive screen use interferes with brain development, sleep, motivation, and social skills.
- Phones and social media are designed to be addictive, delivering easy dopamine and making real-life activities feel dull by comparison.
- Kids compare themselves to curated online lives, leading to insecurity, photo deletion, and disconnection.

What You Can Do

1. **Delay the smartphone:** Consider signing the Wait Until 8th pledge and committing to delay giving your child a smartphone until at least 8th grade. Visit: www.waituntil8th.org

2. **Choose low-distraction communication tools:** If your child needs to stay in touch, try a flip phone or a smartwatch with call/text capabilities but no internet or apps.

3. **Set clear boundaries**

- Establish screen-free zones (e.g., dinner table, bedrooms)
- Set time limits and app restrictions – this is critical if your child already has a phone!
- Use parental controls and downtime settings
- Consider joining PACT www.pactaction.org (Parent Alliance for Conscious Tech), a local group of local parents supporting each other in navigating technology in the San Geronimo Valley

4. Model healthy screen habits: Kids mirror what they see. Consider your own phone habits, especially around family time and transitions.

5. Replace screen time with real connection: Encourage activities that build confidence, community, and creativity. Walks, board games, art, outdoor play, and unstructured time matter more than ever.

6. Use tech to manage tech: Try apps like **Opal**, which help users track and reduce screen time with built-in accountability tools.

A Final Word from Wyatt: "Phones were meant to connect us, but they're creating a barrier. We have a chance to raise a generation that finds its worth not in likes or followers, but in real life fully lived beyond a screen." Thank you for supporting your child's growth, resilience, and mental health. Together, we can create a healthier, more connected community.