



# San Diego Unified School District

## Fact Sheet

### Cellular Telephone and Electronic Signaling Device Policy

A state law (SB 1253) effective January 1, 2003, allows school boards to determine the policy on the use and possession of cellular phones (cell phones) and other electronic signaling devices such as pagers on school campuses. The law repeals a previous state law that prohibited the possession and use of such devices by students on school campuses statewide.

In December 2002, a workgroup of district school principals and parents met to review the new law and to begin formulation of a policy regarding student possession and use of electronic signaling devices for district schools. The workgroup sought to balance considerations of student safety and well being with the need to maintain a learning environment free from distractions.

In December 2003, the Board of Education approved Board Policy H-6980, which allows that:

- Student possession and use of cellular phones, pagers and other electronic signaling devices on school campuses and school buses, at school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of school district employees is permitted under circumstances described herein.
- All students (K-12) may use these devices on campus before school begins and after school ends.
- Students in high school, grades 9–12, may also use these devices during the lunch period.
- These devices must be kept out of sight and turned off during the instructional program and in the classroom. Unauthorized use of these devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment. School officials, including classroom teachers, may take the device away from students if used during the times not permitted. Repeated unauthorized use of such devices may lead to disciplinary action.

The final policy was approved after additional principal, teacher, parent and student input was sought. Any revisions to administrative procedures will follow as necessary.

Students and parents are reminded that during an emergency situation, cellular sites may be overwhelmed due to a high volume of calls. Should this occur, emergency communication could also be affected. It is important that cell phones and other devices be used sparingly so that emergency services have priority to assist the students and staff on the site.

#### SUMMARY

- ❖ Students may possess cell phones, pagers, and other electronic signaling devices on school campuses and school buses, at school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision of district employees.
- ❖ All students (K-12) may use these devices on campus before and after school.
- ❖ Students in high school grades 9-12 may also use these devices during lunch.
- ❖ These devices must be kept out of sight and turned off during the instructional program and in the classroom.
- ❖ School officials, including classroom teachers, may take the device away from students if used during the times not permitted.
- ❖ Repeated unauthorized use of these devices may lead to disciplinary action.

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