CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
SMMHS Middle School students MAY NOT have cell phones and personal electronic devices out during the school day. This includes during all classes, during the Advisory Period, and in between classes. Smart Watches such as Apple Watches, Samsung Gear Watches, Fitbits, etc. are considered electronic devices, and although they can be worn, they cannot be used for any type of communication during these times. Middle School students MAY have their phones out during lunchtime only. All cell phones and devices must be turned off and placed in the student’s BACKPACK or LOCKER at all times throughout the school day with the exception of lunchtime. If a student has their cell phone on his/her person (in their pocket, in their coat, etc.), this is considered a violation of the cell phone policy.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – 9th and 10th Grade
SMMHS High School students in 9th and 10th grade MAY NOT have cell phones and personal electronic devices out during any class, including Directed Studies. Smart Watches such as Apple Watches, Samsung Gear Watches, Fitbits, etc. are considered electronic devices, and although they can be worn, they cannot be used for any type of communication during these times. High School 9th and 10th grade students MAY have their cell phones out between classes and during lunchtime only. All cell phones and devices must be turned off and placed in the student’s BACKPACK or LOCKER during all class times including Directed Studies. If a student has their cell phone on their person (in their pocket, in his/her coat, etc.), this is considered a violation of the cell phone policy.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – 11th and 12th Grade
SMMHS High School students in 11th and 12th grade MAY have cell phones and personal electronic devices out during classes and Directed Studies ONLY if directed by the teacher for ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES ONLY. High School 11th and 12th grade students MAY have their cell phones out between classes and during lunchtime as well. All cell phones and devices must remain on silent mode at all times.

All students are restricted at all times during school hours and on the bus from using their cell phones or electronic devices in the following manner:

- Making or receiving phone calls
- Accessing social media or making social media posts
- Using any recording feature to include the phone/device camera, video camera, voice recorder, etc. unless directed by the teacher and under their supervision for an academic activity
- Using real-time audio/video including Face Time, Skype, etc.
- Having cell phones out during school day assemblies, programs, etc.
- Use of the phone’s or device’s speakers to play music aloud
- No over the ear headphones. Only earbuds are allowed during non-restricted times and High School students can only have one earbud in when transitioning in the halls for communication purposes.
The consequences for violations of this policy both at the HS and/or MS levels shall result in the following actions per HCDE:

1st Violation – Phone and device privilege is lost for 5 school days. Student must check their phone in with their grade level Assistant Principal each morning and check the phone out each afternoon. Failure to check in a phone or device, checking in an alternate phone or device, or using another student’s phone or device, will result in additional days of lost phone privilege and/or In-School Suspension.

2nd Violation - Phone and device privilege is lost for 10 school days. Student must check their phone in with their grade level Assistant Principal each morning and check the phone out each afternoon. Failure to check in a phone or device, checking in an alternate phone or device, or using another student’s phone or device, will result in additional days of lost phone privilege and/or In-School Suspension.

3rd Violation - Phone and device privilege is lost for the remainder of the school year. If a student uses another student’s phone or device at any time during this period, the student will receive In-School Suspension. If a student brings a phone or device to school at any time during this period, the student will receive Out-of-School Suspension.

This policy is designed to protect the educational program of all students. The use of student cell phones or other electronic devices at school is a privilege, not a right, and all students will have access to Chromebooks and other instructional technology each day. Students found by staff members to be in violation of the above rules will be subject to the disciplinary actions stated in this policy. Students using cell phones or electronic devices in a manner that violates our school rules of conduct (sending inappropriate messages or pictures, harassment, unlawful use, etc.) will be subject to more severe disciplinary actions up to and including extended suspension and/or expulsion. Neither the Hamilton County Department of Education nor Signal Mountain Middle High School will assume any liability for any lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones or electronic devices in school or any related activity.

School-Issued Chromebook Notes: As part of the district-wide 1:1 initiative, all students in grades 6 through 12 will have access to school-issued Chromebooks for academic use. Students in grades 6 through 10 MAY NOT have personal Chromebooks, laptops, etc. at school. Students in grades 11 and 12 MAY have personal Chromebooks, laptops, etc. at school for academic use. All personal devices must be in alignment with school policies.

Note to Parents: Please do not try to contact or communicate with students via cell phone, text, etc. during instructional or restricted times. All emergency contact to students should go through the main office or nurse’s office when necessary. Each classroom is equipped with a phone so teachers can be reached to receive information or important student messages relayed from the office. In most cases, a student may be given permission to use a classroom or administrative telephone to contact a parent or guardian if necessary. Please note that all students will have access to their phones at least once per day to check any messages from parents or communicate with parents regarding transportation changes, afterschool activities, etc.