

Sent: Wed 4/25/2012 2:03 PM

Hi Mark!

Wow! What an issue!

Here in the Denver area cell phones are a way of life that has been adopted even for our kids right down to the grade schools. While I am not fully versed in the school or district rules here, because of school shootings like Columbine, kids as a general rule carry their cell phones at all times. It is considered a security must for most parents and kids and is tolerated by the schools as long as disruptions and cheating are avoided.

I believe that the use of phones in the classroom is generally regulated by the teacher in that each teacher sets the rule for their own classroom including confiscating phones causing any disruption, but generally that is for the time in the class. My kids tell me that the usual teacher statement is "if I hear or see it, it is mine (for the rest of class, or the day), if it is a repeated issue...to the office...risk of detention or expulsion." I have also heard that some teachers just keep a basket on their desk and ask students to deposit all phones (all off, or silenced without vibration) as a holding spot during tests. Any signs of cheating and it becomes an issue for the principal. Formal testing like ACT says no phones are allowed in the testing area or you will be expelled as a cheater.

In general, kids know not to use phones in class and most kids keep all phones on vibrate only at all times while at school and know not to respond to vibration alerts during class time. This has been great for me as a parent because I can text a message about pick up or activity changes at any time and not worry about disrupting them and the school office doesn't need to deal with my message. My kids tell me that if the class has some study time or down time many teachers have no problem with quiet texting, web browsing or gaming as long as there is no disruption to others and the student is keeping up with class expectations.

My niece is in 7th grade here at a private school and kids are expected to keep their phones in their lockers during school hours. I don't know what the consequences are if they forget or mess up, but I seriously doubt those private paying parents will lose any phones.

So, in general the same **old rules** related to being disruptive to the class, or for cheating are the rules that are applied to phones and personal computers like laptops and Ipads or notebooks. The phones or devices themselves are not the problem (just about everyone carries these personal devices). It is the behavior that is the issue that is addressed. As for bullying over phones...this I believe is a legal offense here like possessing drugs and would be reported to the police department or sheriff and not fully handled by the school.

My college age kids carry all sorts of personal devices all the time and there are no rules about their use during class, just an expectation to stay honest and not disruptive. Every student has

a pad/notebook or laptop for note taking and even most take all their tests on their own private laptops and turn in their homework electronically.

If you need me to give more exacting details for Colorado, let me know and I will try to hunt that up for you.

I agree with you that confiscating a phone from a child for longer than a day is like a theft. The phone is the private property of the person who owns it and is usually under a service contract as well. Anyone should agree with that. Your school district needs to get with it on some up to date expectations!

Teresa