

March 31, 2008

Dear Parents,

The Austin Independent School District Board of Trustees recently adopted revisions to FNCE(LOCAL): Student Conduct—Telecommunications Devices. This policy controls student possession and use of telecommunications devices, including cell phones and other personal electronic devices. The changes made to the policy became effective upon adoption, and will be strictly enforced at LASA as of April 7, 2008. For the remainder of this week, LASA will remind students to put away and turn off electronic devices and will continue to enforce its current telephone policy.

You and your student should be aware of the following important provisions of this policy:

In order to allow students to better communicate with their families, all students may now possess cell phones on school property. Elementary and middle school students will now, like high school students, be allowed to possess cell phones on school property or at school-sponsored or school-related events off of school property. All cell phones MUST remain turned off and “out of sight” during the school day on school property.

Electronic devices may be in a student’s possession during the instructional day, but the device MUST remain turned off and be stored out of sight. Examples of electronic devices include portable music players such as MP3 players and iPods, handheld gaming devices such as Gameboys and PlayStation Portables, and other similar devices that store, record, or play auditory and or visual information. Students are also allowed to use electronic devices on school buses and while attending non-instructional school-sponsored events.

All cell phones and electronic devices MUST remain turned off and out of sight during the school day on school property. This includes passing periods, free periods, lunch periods, etc., and hallways, cafeterias, gymnasiums, etc. “Out of sight” means in a backpack or locker (or similarly stowed), NOT in a student’s hand under a desk. Violation of this rule will result in confiscation of the device.

Students may not possess telecommunications or electronic devices on their persons during testing periods. An exception will apply if the instructor or testing authority allows use of a device, such as a graphing calculator. Students may be required to empty their pockets before beginning tests to ensure compliance.

Student possession of telecommunications devices is a privilege rather than a right, and is subject to cancellation for misbehavior or other reasonable cause.

Students may be allowed to use electronic devices by instructors for instructional purposes (such as a graphing calculator in a math class, or a digital camera).

Confiscated devices will be held in the LASA Principal’s Secretary’s Office. The student’s parent must claim a confiscated device in person, and must present information identifying the device (such as the serial number on the device). Cell phones will not be available for claiming until two days after the date of confiscation, and will be subject to a \$15 processing fee. Additionally, students may be subject to disciplinary action for violating school rules, and their device privileges may be suspended or revoked.

If you allow your student to carry a cell phone or other electronic device to school, you should discuss with your student the rules that apply to his or her possession of that device on school grounds, and the consequences that may apply for failure to comply with these rules. Additionally, you should keep a record of the device’s identifying information, in case of confiscation or other loss. **The District is not responsible for devices brought onto District property that are lost, stolen, or damaged.**

Please help us make this policy adjustment as smooth as possible by making sure that you and your student understand the new requirements, as well as the consequences for violation of these rules. If you have any questions about how these rules will be enforced at LASA please contact Joselyn Wade at 414-6581.

Sincerely,

Rene Sanchez
Principal,
Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School