Bridges Charter School	Board Policy- **Cell Phone Policy**	
Policy Number: **6163.5**	Adopted: **6/15/20**	Revised: **12/11/23, 4/20/26**

When on campus, ALL student cell phones (and any other electronic device) must be turned off and not on their person (i.e. pocket, purse,). The device/phone must be stored in their locker or backpack once a student enters the gates in the morning and remain there until exiting the gates in the afternoon unless explicit permission is given by a teacher or an emergency situation arises. Watches connected to any cellular or internet data must be in "school time" mode or turned off while inside the school gates during school hours. If a student needs to contact their parent/guardian during the school day they may do so either with the permission of the classroom teacher or by reporting to the front office and requesting to make a phone call. Video recording or taking pictures of other students/staff is strictly forbidden unless written consent has been given in advance.

In accordance with California Assembly Bill 962 (AB 962), student possession and use of personal cell phones and other personal communication devices is prohibited during any emergency, lockdown, evacuation, or perceived threat of danger while on campus or during school-sponsored activities.

During such situations, the use of student cell phones poses significant safety risks and interferes with emergency response procedures. To ensure student and staff safety, all communication during emergencies will be directed and managed by school administration and emergency personnel.

Staff and Teachers may utilize cell phones, the land-lines in the classrooms, and the internal emergency communication app. Students must follow staff instructions regarding device use at all times. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action consistent with school policy.

Safety Risks Posed by Student Cell Phone Use During Emergencies

Student access to and use of cell phones during emergencies or perceived threats of danger may:

- Distract students from following critical instructions from school staff or emergency responders
- Cause panic or escalation through the rapid spread of rumors, misinformation, or unverified information
- Interfere with emergency response efforts, including law enforcement operations, reunification procedures, and incident management
- Compromise campus security by revealing sensitive information such as lockdown locations, evacuation routes, or staff movements
- Overload communication systems, making it more difficult for emergency responders and school officials to communicate effectively
- Increase emotional distress for students by exposing them to alarming messages, images, or social media content during a crisis
- Delay accountability and supervision, as students may hide, move, or act independently rather than remaining where directed

For these reasons, restricting student cell phone use during emergencies is a necessary safety measure designed to protect students, staff, and first responders.

Certain exceptions to the policy are as follows:

- When a teacher or administrator grants explicit permission to a student to possess or use a smartphone/device for his/her class or activity
- When a doctor determines a smartphone/device is necessary for the health or well-being of a student
- When possession or use of the smartphone is required in a student's Individualized Education Program

If a student is in violation of this policy their phone or device may be confiscated and held by a teacher or a staff member or sent to the office until the end of the day. Repeat offenses may result in the student being banned from bringing their device to school.