General John Stricker Middle School
Cell Phone Policy

At General John Stricker Middle School, student achievement and safety are our top priorities. To sustain our focus on achievement, we must limit disruptions to the instructional program. As you may know, cell phones have become an ever-present accessory of middle school students. Most of our students are becoming more cognizant of how to appropriately turn off and store cell phones. In other cases, unattended student cell phone use in school has resulted in:

- phone calls/texts/social media interrupting the learning environment.
- bullying or disrespectful interactions via unwanted text messaging/sharing of photos/social media.
- cell phones ringing during class, or becoming damaged, lost or stolen
- students demonstrating disrespect toward staff which can negatively affect relationships
- unwanted or inappropriate photos and recordings being taken; sharing of inappropriate pictures/videos with peers

**BCPS Board of Education Policy and Superintendent’s Rule 5552** indicate that all personal devices are to be off and away during the school day.

**BCPS Student Behavior Handbook says the following is a Category I.U. offense:**

Use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes during regular instructional hours. The ban on the use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes also applies to buses while being transported to and from school and while participating in school-sponsored activities or events.

All students are issued a laptop device so cell phones are not needed during the school day. When in the building, students are asked to power down their cell phone and place it in the locker for the entire day. We ask that parents refrain from texting/calling their child’s phone during school. Should an emergency occur, we ask that you contact the front office. To protect our learning environment, we will follow these procedures if a student were to violate this BCPS policy:

**GJSMS First Offense:** The student will be instructed to put the cell phone away in the locker. A verbal warning will be given to the student. The warning will be documented in FOCUS (student information system).

**GJSMS Second Offense:** The student will be instructed to put the cell phone away in the locker. The teacher will contact the parent and the communication will be documented in FOCUS (student information system).

**GJSMS Third Offense:** The student will be instructed to put the cell phone away in the locker. The student will be referred to an administrator who will contact the parent/guardian and work together to determine additional interventions to effectively remedy the situation. Steps will be documented in FOCUS (student info system).

We encourage our parents to discuss proper use of cell phones and how to securely store them as they are expensive items. We will also do our part to coach students to make good choices. Thank you for working with us to maintain a safe, appropriate learning environment.