



Education and Early Childhood Development Office of the Minister

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June 6, 2024

To Nova Scotia public school students, families and caregivers:

Informed by consultations with our school system partners, we are taking action to improve achievement and well-being of our students and the school climate by restricting access to cell phones and other personal mobile devices during the school day.

Beginning in September, every student will be expected to have their personal cell phone turned off and stored during instructional time. Students in Grades 7 to 12 may be permitted to use their cell phones during break times if that is the decision of the school and those students may also be permitted to use their cell phones when directed by the teacher as part of a planned learning experience. Students in Grades PP - 6 will turn off and store their cell phones for the entire school day, including non-instructional times. Exceptions may be made to address students' individual needs (medical/ability) when determined in consultation with Student Planning Team, that includes parents/caregivers.

Principals and staff will collaborate with their SAC to review the expectations of this Directive and consider any site-specific details. Once the school's implementation plan is developed, the plan will be communicated to all students, parents and guardians to ensure that everyone knows what to expect for the coming school year.

I know there will be questions surrounding how this Directive will impact a typical school day for students. To support your questions, a summary of the Directive and a Q & A has been developed. You can view this at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/cellphones>. I would also invite you to view this inspiring video of one school's journey removing personal cell phones. [VIDEO](#)

Thank you to everyone who has shared their perspective on this issue including the 797 SAC members who participated in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) Thoughtexchange on this issue, the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia, NSTU Committees, Provincial Ministerial Advisory Groups, representative voices of students, teachers, support staff, school administrators, and other tables offering community first voice who have been consulted this year. We have also been supported in this conversation by partners from Public Health and IWK Mental Health and Addictions.

There was broad consensus that the presence of personal cell phones in classrooms presents a significant distraction to learning. Responses overwhelmingly supported clear, consistent restrictions on cellphone use. At the heart of this issue is our focus on ensuring that schools are safe, positive and productive environments for all students. It is important that students have access to a learning environment that is free from unnecessary distraction where they can thrive.

Thank you for supporting this Directive and for your continued support of our efforts to ensure that schools are safe, positive and productive environments for all students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Becky Druhan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Becky Druhan
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development