

2022 State Journalism Championship



#4 Newspaper Editorial Writing

Time Limit – 1:15

Directions: You are a reporter for the student newspaper. From the given information, write an editorial in the collective voice. Remember that as an editorial writer you should support or oppose policy or action; you should not sermonize. Entries will be evaluated on presenting a clear idea, convincing reasoning, supporting evidence, and quality of writing.

When you are finished:

1. Type your first and last name at the top of your document.
 2. Save document as a pdf with the filename: **yourfirstlastname_editorialwriting_Class** (For example: **SusieSmith_editorialwriting_ClassA**)
 3. Notify the proctor when you are finished.
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Happy High School, located in Smithtown, has 600 students enrolled in grades 9-12. Last week, Principal Susan Martinez introduced an updated policy regarding cell phones for the upcoming school year. The policy states: “Cell phones may be used on school grounds before school, during lunch, and after school. Cell phone use is prohibited in classrooms, restrooms, and school offices, unless otherwise stated by a teacher. During the instructional day, cell phones must remain out of sight and in silent mode.”

THOSE SUPPORTING THE POLICY

The purpose of the cell phone policy is to limit distractions and increase appropriate use during instructional time while still allowing them to be used.

THOSE OPPOSING THE POLICY

This policy does not allow cell phones to be used at will.

Susan Martinez, principal

“We want to do everything we can to limit learning distractions in school while understanding that when used appropriately in the classroom cell phones can be a powerful tool. Cell phones can be used for research and engaging with a lesson.”

Jessica Jones, superintendent

“Technology is a critical component in preparing our students to be successful. However, if not used appropriately it can hinder learning. Our job is to limit distractions while providing the best education possible.”

Jay James, parent

“This is an excellent policy change. My daughter spends too much time on her cell phone Snapchatting her friends instead of having actual conversations. I’m afraid her cell phone is ruining her social skills.”

Dani Fitzgibbons, parent

“My son is a diabetic. He needs constant access to his cell phone to monitor his blood sugar. The school will need to provide a medical accommodation for him at a minimum.”

Dean Smith, student

“This policy change is probably good for me. Don’t tell my mom, but I spend a lot of time on my phone watching TikTok when I should probably be doing my homework.”

Sierra O’Malley, student

“I don’t feel this policy is necessary. I have a right to use my cell phone whenever I want. Plus, kids are going to do it anyway.”

Anonymous Teacher

“I’m happy the administration is allowing us to decide when and how the students can use their cell phones. I plan to find positive ways for kids to use their cell phones in my classroom. Technology is a powerful tool when used appropriately.”

A concerned parent

“If cell phones are going to be used in the classroom for research is the school district going to provide them? The latest iPhone costs \$800. I don’t want my kid to be at a disadvantage because he doesn’t have the right cell phone.”