

## CELLPHONES IN SCHOOLS

The management of cellphones in schools continues to be of significant concern. The current trend among many schools is to develop a restrictive set of policies to address the use of cellphones by students. This trend is a result of concern over the impact cellphones are having on student engagement as well as the building of meaningful relationships.

In a recent issue of *Education Week*, three teens were interviewed to give their recommendations on what schools can do to support healthier cellphone use. Below is a summary of their recommendations.



1. Try “phone fasts” or schoolwide phone bans—that include staff—of a day or a week to help students see the benefits of disconnecting.
2. Communicate clear expectations at the start of the school year around cellphone use.
3. Provide a variety of phone-free, after-school activities for students so they have alternatives to sitting at home scrolling through their phones.
4. Explicitly teach students “cellphone etiquette,” such as putting phones down and making eye contact when engaged in conversations and asking permission before taking photos of others.
5. Acknowledge the benefits that cellphones and social media provide students, such as finding supportive communities, developing new hobbies and interests, and networking.
6. Teach digital citizenship skills, such as awareness that what students post will follow them forever and could harm their reputations.