

Get Schooled (<http://blogs.ajc.com/get-schooled-blog>)

What's the hangup with cell phones in schools?

8:00 am August 10, 2009, by Maureen Downey

Good morning and welcome back to school for all the systems cranking up this morning, including my own system.

Many students heading back to the classroom today are being forced to leave their cell phones behind thanks to school rules banning their possession.

The day may be coming, though, when students could find themselves in trouble for leaving their cell phones home.

Only they won't be called cell phones. They will be dubbed mobile devices or hand-held computers. Already, they are being used around the world by innovative schools capitalizing on children's natural affinity for technology and the omnipresence of cell phones. (By one count, 60 percent of second-graders are predicted to carry cell phones by the end of 2010.)

In pilot programs, teachers are utilizing even basic cell phones to teach math, record dramatic presentations, document chemical changes and give tests.

"Laptops are very '90s," says University of Michigan researcher Elliot Soloway. "They are your daddy's computers."

Are any of you using cell phones in your classes. Some teachers elsewhere are and there is a movement afoot to promote cell phones as hand-held computers.

- If your kids are doing anything with cell phones in their classes or you are a teacher using cell phones, let us know how. I think it is a great idea to tap into the technology that has become an integral part of students lives today.

But are cell phones a reasonable choice? They are cheap and plentiful and clever teachers have found novel ways to integrate them into their lesson plans.

I still wonder whether cell phones are the next frontier in classroom technology?

51 comments

Add your comment

Perturbed

August 10th, 2009 5:44 am

You're right on with this one! <http://www.cellphonesinlearning.com/>

Affordable, meaningful tools. And imagine the lower paperwork for administrators when they don't take them anymore!

[Link](#)

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R. Carter

August 10th, 2009 5:53 am

Check the cell phone policy at Greeneville High School in Tennessee. Over 98% of students have cell phones. The cell phones have been integrated into the classroom routine. Very progressive! <http://ghs.gcschools.net/?PageName=LatestNews&Section=Highlights&ItemID=40259&lSrc=School<ype=Highlights&SchoolID=3092>

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Old Timer

August 10th, 2009 6:14 am

Well, the "problem" is teachers – kids may be technology savvy, but are we? I don't text. I don't surf web on my cell phone. If I had my way, I will turn my phone on only when I want to make a call.

The question we should be asking, though, is does technology REALLY improve teaching? Laptops may be "very 90s" and I have no idea how much they were really used in schools, but have our schools gotten any better because of laptops? Haven't we done enough fad chasing in the history of US education?

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drew (former teacher)

August 10th, 2009 6:34 am

Yeah, I'm sure the kids won't be using their cell phones to make personal calls, text their friends, or play games.

Students are inundated with technology outside of school, so the last thing they need is more of it in schools. How about schools focusing on the needs of students that are NOT addressed outside of schools, like the ability to think critically, or read and understand the written word, or possibly even write coherently? It just kills me the way schools bow down at the altar of technology, as if it

holds the key to the problems in our schools. Schools should focus on skills that students DON'T get outside the classroom, and that most certainly is not cell phones. Don't get me wrong, I'm not a Luddite, I don't think technology is bad or evil, I simply don't believe that schools should blindly accommodate whatever technology comes down the pike. But I'm just spittin' in the wind, cause we all know that technology rules.

Ironically, perhaps technology does hold the key...how about we just give every student some nice shiny technology (but not your dad's laptop...that's SO 90's!), move public education "online", and just do away with schools and teachers altogether? Just think of the savings! After all, school is your dad's education...it's SO 19th century!. And technology is always good...right?

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ScienceTeacher671

August 10th, 2009 6:37 am

Many of the schools that were giving every student a laptop have reversed course – in part because the teachers didn't use the technology that much (see Old Timer's comment), and in part because there were too many laptops out of service at any given time and/or the students used them to IM each other or browse things unrelated to the subject at hand instead of doing their work.

I agree that it's probably a coming trend, but I have no idea how I'd incorporate them RIGHT NOW...

And RIGHT NOW students use them as the 21st century version of passing notes, except they are so much better because you can instantly pass a note without leaning across the aisle, you can pass notes to students in other classes without waiting for class change, and you can even "pass notes" to someone who isn't even in school!

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Ernest

August 10th, 2009 7:14 am

The day may be coming, though, when students could find themselves in trouble for leaving their cell phones home.

That very well may be but in today's environment, 'smart devices' have probably caused more grief for teachers than anything else. I can recall shortly after calculators became affordable for most students, math teachers would ban them from tests because they wanted to see that students understood how to perform calculations without a computer (showing your work was part of the grade). I believe many would agree that most students today are using cell phones during the school day are doing so not for instructional purposes but perhaps cheating.

I agree with Old Timer also, there have still be some challenges in have some schools embrace computers. Some of the challenges are due to not fully integrating teachers into how computers can enhance learning, some due to not having enough for every student to have sufficient 'keyboarding time'.

When reading Dick Tracy from years ago, I wondered when those two way wrist watches would be something everyone would have. It seems we've had them for a while with our smart devices.

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mdowney

August 10th, 2009 7:18 am

Folks, AJC.com still isn't showing my column on cell phones in schools, but I am working on getting the URL up and running. Maureen

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Turd Ferguson

August 10th, 2009 7:43 am

When I was growing up we didnt need all these new-fangled kabobbles that are being used by these young whipper-snappers, nowadays. I had to walk 2 miles to school, uphill both ways, ate a balogna sandwich, washed it down with water and was glad to have it.

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William Casey

August 10th, 2009 7:51 am

This essay and comments remind me of the discussions about TV's as teaching tools in the 1960's.... lots of potential, little follow-thru. I was a teacher, coach and administrator for 31 years. One thing I learned is that teens have an infinite capacity for being distracted and I fear that hand-held electronic devices will only add to this. But, I could be wrong. Maybe high school students have changed since my day.

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mom_247

August 10th, 2009 8:07 am

Ummm...as a parent of a teenager and a former teacher, I can tell you right now that if a cellphone is out, it is not being used (and would not be used) for academic purposes. Kids today text about like they breathe. I see no reason for laptops in the classroom on a daily basis either. If you need laptops, let it be for a specific academic purpose, for a specific length of time, and under close supervision.

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Atl Resident

August 10th, 2009 9:21 am

I agree with Turd, back in the day, I had to walk to school everyday, walk to sports practice, no cellphone, no calculator until senior year in high school, no car, and of course bullying was around then and before my time. So it's not right to blame the teachers for every damn thing when most kids can snap their finger and get most of what they want. Kids should be disciplined better which comes from home and that's the reality that most of these issues like cellphone use start at home and not at school.

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Wes

August 10th, 2009 9:23 am

WOW ok so there are so many different opinions out there about cell phones and laptops in school. My chosen profession is Technology Communication. One of the main arguments against handheld and mini pc's in the class room is that the child will use if you things other there what they are suppose to be used for. With the ability to send our kids to school with cell's and laptop also come's with the ability to monitor those devices. Example....Little john wants to instant message little Sarah....Ok there are what 30 kids in the class....So you take a feed from the 30 satellite laptops to a central feed projected to teachers screen. Pretty simple to do. As for the teachers not being willing to update themselves....well Teachers this is a new world where if you want to get a kid to pay attention you better be a color filled LCD display. I have children of a school age and use my and their laptops to teach them things at home they are not getting in school. School have access to virtual book, that if you take the time and look are better then the text book and more appealing solely based on how the information is being relayed. I vote yes on tech in school so long as the teachers will use it and the school will support the monitoring of the pc's and or cells.

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Fulton Teacher

August 10th, 2009 9:27 am

There are a number of reasons why cell phones should not be used in education. First, if you work in a lower income school where even if the students have cell phones, they may be cut off for none payment any day. Secondly, they are a definite distraction. Students text all day long. They walk around with earbuds in their ears (well, not in my class) and listen to mp3 players. It's insane! There is a time and place for technology which is appropriate, but not cell phones. Personally, I don't like using computers that often. It's too much work making sure students stay on task and aren't checking their email!

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LReilly

August 10th, 2009 9:31 am

I am a big advocate for cell phones in the classroom and I just wrote a 6 week online professional

development workshop for Edtech Leaders Online called "Cell Phones as Learning Tools." Liz Kolb whose blog was referenced in another comment also consulted on the workshop. Even the most basic cell phones can be used as powerful tools for teaching and learning. When integrated with free, web-based resources, cell phones offer students the ability to share ideas through activities such as blogging, podcasting, and data gathering. While there are many legitimate concerns about using cell phones in schools, it is important that schools prepare students for success in a world overflowing with information. It is also important for students to learn how to use technology ethically and responsibly. Banning technologies does nothing to prepare our students for the future. For those interested in the topic- I have collected many resources: <http://www.diigo.com/list/lreilly/cellphones>

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Cammi317

August 10th, 2009 9:32 am

I tried to call my daughter's new middle school several times last week to ask their cell phone policy, but no one answered the phones. I sent it in any way and told her to keep it turned off in her purse. She barely keeps it on and charged when she is not in school, so I highly doubt she will be playing with it in school. Her bus will drop her off about 15 minutes before I get home and it's a long walk to the back of the subdivision to our house. I told her to call me as soon as she gets off of the bus and to stay on the phone with me until she is in the house and the alarm is reset. This is the first year she is riding the school bus at all, and for safety reasons I need for her to keep her phone with her. We really don't know anyone in our neighborhood with the exception of one next door neighbor. Hopefully she will make friends quickly and I will be a little less nervous.

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Voice or Reason#1

August 10th, 2009 9:35 am

No cell phones in school. If a teacher/student or parent has a problem, or needs to contact the other for an emergency, etc., they should call the principal—he/she can get the student or call the parent. All this technology is ruining these kids...and adults!

It's as if people can't even go to the toilet without an earpiece glued to their ear! Folks don't drive without aimlessly gabbing on the phone, or texting—which is dangerous to everyone.

I am so tired of hearing about Facebook, MySpace, Ebay, Twitter [WTF!], all that stuff. My cell phone bill is \$19.95 for just 60 minutes. I rarely use 20 min. a month. My cell phone is for me/my safety, or an occasional "I'm running late" to whomever I'm meeting up with; NOT for general gabbing; and my friends know to NOT call me on my cell just cause a,b,or c. I am not uncomfortable with myself or my thoughts. And actually, I like land lines, where I'm at home, etc., and you have my undivided attention, and vice versa.

I so yearn for a simpler time without all this foolishness. Some technology is good, but people have just gone crazy with it and it is not good. Kids aren't even going to know how to spell correctly, or speak properly.

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whatever

August 10th, 2009 9:35 am

With that thinking when will schools realize that maybe we don't need teachers, classrooms, or buildings? Just have the kids log on at home and have the computer teach them. Then they will all become good, little, mindless drones. willing to believe what ever is chosen to stuff into their empty brains.

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LReilly

August 10th, 2009 9:40 am

The "Old Timer" comments crack me up. Wishing for the old days is no way to prepare students for the future. Even the most basic cell phones can be used as powerful tools for teaching and learning. When integrated with free, web-based resources, cell phones offer students the ability to share ideas through activities such as blogging, podcasting, and data gathering. While there are many legitimate concerns about using cell phones in schools, it is important that schools prepare students for success in a world overflowing with information. It is also important for students to learn how to use technology ethically and responsibly. Sure they are using their phones all the time but they are never taught more constructive ways to use them. So, the motivation would be there if they had the chance to use them for learning. I just wrote a 6 week online professional development workshop on cell phones for learning. Liz Kob whose blog <http://www.cellphonesinlearning.com/> was referenced earlier also consulted. Surveys of access to cell phones have shown that they are ubiquitous and even students who are on free or reduced lunch have cell phones and sometimes even iphones. Being connected is a priority for students so fighting it might only disengage them from the classroom even more.

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Voice or Reason#1

August 10th, 2009 9:40 am

And, to show how non-techy I am...what happens if I click "Link" at the bottom of these boards? Is it some way to always find certain posts? Thanks.

[Link](#)

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nicole

August 10th, 2009 9:50 am

here is the problem I have with technology..this summer we were at my mothers in mineral bluff..she works at the N.C. Murphy walmart..during a storm their power went out...I had been in the process of paying with cash..the girls drawer was open to give me my change..but the computers went out..with the power, which meant the screen telling her how much to give me

back was blank...my purchase had come to 23.42...I had given her 30 dollars...she could not count my change back to me. We don't need technology..we need to teach our children to work without it first.

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Back To School | All Days Long

August 10th, 2009 9:51 am

[...] Good morning and welcome back to school for all the systems ... Atlanta Journal Constitution Many students heading back to the classroom today are being forced to leave their cell phones behind thanks to school rules banning their possession. ... See all stories on this topic [...]

[Link](#)

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Seen it all

August 10th, 2009 9:55 am

Let's stop the nonsense. No one is using cell phones as learning tools. Maureen, where the heck did you get this nonsense from? The only people who are advocating that students be allowed cell phones in school are the students themselves and middle class parents who see the devices as another way they could possibly keep tabs on and control their kids.

The phones are mostly used for texting and calling other teens, playing games, etc. They are distractions to the learning environment. As for this fantasy that cell phones somehow will be useful as technological aids in the classroom, look at the way computers are used in the classroom. Most teachers don't have their students use computers on a daily basis anyway. Unless the students are using some mandated computer program (WHICH THE TEACHERS DON'T HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER ANYWAY), these kids are not on computers. They are doing bookwork, worksheets, listening to teacher lectures, watching videos, copying from the board, etc.

Ridiculous nonsense!!!!!! The idea that we should let these kids come to school with average, ordinary cellphones (Sprint, MetroPCS, etc.) and claim that it is for them to use as technology resources for classroom instruction.

Ridiculous!!! They didn't even use the laptop and classroom computers school systems spent MILLIONS and MILLIONS of dollars on. Let's be real for once. Maureen and her friends just want another thing to poke in the schools' eye. This whole cellphone issue is about control. It's just another way for parents to try to exercise some control over schools. It's has NOTHING to do with education or safety.

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Teachersupporter

August 10th, 2009 9:56 am

I only wish the majority of students would use technology in the classroom to study, do research,

think critically, and increase knowledge. Sorry, but the majority would (and do) use it in the classroom to do activities totally unrelated to subject matter. It is a challenge to teach kids who lack the capacity to focus for more than 10 minutes at a time, spell most English words correctly, write a sentence that makes sense, or think on their own...thanks mostly to new and better technology that is available to them outside the classroom. Just what we need, more technology to limit or replace the "thinking process" of the young human mind. Question: why are so many colleges having to create remedial reading and writing courses for students?

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Seen it all

August 10th, 2009 10:01 am

Speaking of ironies, right after a topic about the glories of cellphones, there is a topic on cheating in school. And they want to know why cheating is so rampant in school nowadays. Real simple-arrogant pompousness and a lack of ethics. It's the "me" generation at work (parents and students alike).

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Teachersupporter

August 10th, 2009 10:02 am

Nicole...I had the same experience at KFC. Just imagine what kids could do some day if we actually taught children how to add and subtract in their head (and calculators could not be used until high school) or read a book (not a CD that reads for them). Oh, we did that already. It was in the "unlightened" 50's, 60's, and 70's and all the "unlightened" did was create the technology world in which we now live. Those stupid people!

[Link](#)

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Seen it all

August 10th, 2009 10:03 am

Ok, I just figured out one reason why posts get "lost" on this blog (I just had one "lost"). It seems that posts that are longer than a certain length get blocked before being posted. I guess that means we should be "tweeting", "twittering" or whatever it is they do.

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Cammi317

August 10th, 2009 10:25 am

Nicole, I think we have all had that experience. Those are basic math concepts which should have been mastered by the 1st or 2nd grade. We can't blame technology for grown people who can't add or subtract, but I definitely question what went on in their elementary school systems?

[Link](#)

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Sal

August 10th, 2009 10:30 am

Cell phones are allowed in my daughter's middle school: as long as they are turned off and kept in the locker. The teachers confiscate any cell phone they find outside of the locker...and then the parents have to come in and pick it up. I'm not foolish enough to think that there are some kids pushing the limits and are texting/surfing during class, but having a way to contact my daughter to let her know that I am running late to pick her up at after-school activities is very helpful.

[Link](#)

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Warrior Woman

August 10th, 2009 10:33 am

Old Timer, Voice of Reason, and Seen It All are completely clueless as to the reality of teaching teens today. I've been using cellphones as a learning tool for 3 years now. All my students have them and their parents insist on their carrying them, so why not integrate them? I collect phones that are out other than at permitted times, and use them to text assignments, questions, and other learning or administrative content.

[Link](#)

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asudst1992

August 10th, 2009 11:05 am

I'm an educator and parent of a high school freshman. Cell phones are not as big a problem or distraction as some want to make it seem. I'm no longer in the classroom, but I'm still in a high school setting. My former students will tell you that I confiscated fewer than 5 cell phones the entire year. When I did, I simply kept it until class was over, and convinced the student that he/she wouldn't see it again if I saw it again. My daughter had hers confiscated and turned in to the office last year. I simply picked the phone up and gave it right back to her. I also convinced her that this was a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence. It worked!

[Link](#)

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mdowney

August 10th, 2009 11:09 am

As a later comer to technology and not the most savvy user yet, I agree that cell phones could be abused in a classroom. But I am not sure that is reason enough to reject cell phone technology in classrooms, as kid once used pencils and paper to send notes to one another during class. And I am sure that there are ways to prevent misuse of the phones, controls similar to those on computers. Maureen

[Link](#)

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Old Timer

August 10th, 2009 11:30 am

LRiley & others:

I have yet to see any effective use of cell phone in teaching mathematics, for example. I really don't have much problem with using cell phone or whatever to gether information – that's basically the same thing as going to the library when I was in school. But, the question is how is technology really improve instruction.

I have yet to hear any news that show a drastic improvement of our students' achievement since all these technologies have been "incorporated" into classrooms. For every teacher who can use a Smartboard effectively in his/her teaching, there are probably 20 teachers who are simply using it as an expensive whiteboard.

[Link](#)

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Atl Resident

August 10th, 2009 12:07 pm

Nicole & Cammi, that's sad that you had to experience that and kids can't even count out simple change back to you. Maybe they should bring back old register's back years ago when we all had our very first job and had to count manually. I'm "techy" for sure, but I still know to count and read without all the tech. One of problems with cellphone is cheating with texting, which some kids do anyway without using cellphone.

[Link](#)

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School Time | All Days Long

August 10th, 2009 12:11 pm

[...] What's the hangup with cell phones in schools? | Get Schooled By mdowney I agree with Turd, back in the day, I had to walk to school everyday, walk to sports practice, no cellphone, no calculator until senior year in high school, no car, and of course bullying was around then and before my time. ... Get Schooled – <http://blogs.ajc.com/get-schooled-blog/> [...]

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AP Teacher

August 10th, 2009 12:39 pm

We cannot incorporate cell phones into our curriculum because that would make the assumption that every student has one. I have had a few students who don't have a cell phone. What do we tell them – oh, here's an alternate assignment for you. And last year, a student was caught

Googling answers to the Gateway exam during the test! I have had students attempt to take pictures of tests and send the images to students in the afternoon classes.

My own children do own a cellphone, and they do take them to school. My rule is, the phone should be on silent mode all day, and if you get caught using/abusing this privilege – you lose the phone altogether. So far, so good.

[Link](#)

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Cere

August 10th, 2009 12:43 pm

“Imagine a school with children who can read and write, but with teachers who cannot, and you have a metaphor of the Information Age in which we live.”

- Peter Cochrane, futurologist

[Link](#)

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Chazz

August 10th, 2009 1:13 pm

My wife is a teacher and she has problems with kids sneaking cell phones in and texting all their friends instead of listening to her instructions. Then when she hands out work, she has to explain it all over again because they weren't listening — they were too busy texting their boyfriends/girlfriends. There is nothing with cell phones that can “enhance” the learning in her class. The kids need to focus on the class and forget about the friends' list in their cell phones. Too many kids see school as just a social event instead of where you where you learn about math, science, history.... Cell phones are a distraction when the kids should have eyes focused up front.

[Link](#)

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Reality 2

August 10th, 2009 1:33 pm

All these talks about using technology in schools is just a big ploy by the industry. Those people who write units or whatever for classroom use, they are just simply being pawns – consciously or not. We should first clearly demonstrate that new technology allows us to do things that we couldn't have done – or do the same thing MUCH more efficiently – first.

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Joy in Teaching

August 10th, 2009 4:09 pm

Please tell me you are kidding, right? Parents don't need to buy cell phones for their kid to use in class for instructional purposes. Kids don't respect the phones and they constantly misuse them at school. When I left school Friday, I passed two kids who were texting each other and they couldn't have been more than 5 feet apart. It was after school, so they had permission to talk, but preferred to text each other instead. I felt sad for them.

[Link](#)

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catlady

August 10th, 2009 5:45 pm

Could we talk about the collusion between lawmakers and private schools to cheat the taxpayers out of thousands of dollars by pretending to enroll their kids in public school? I mean, the state is SO flush with money! And these "Christian" schools teach values, right?

[Link](#)

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mdowney

August 10th, 2009 6:07 pm

Catlady, I will post tomorrow on that. I am still trying to answer some questions about this issue – for instance, how do the parents faux enrolling their kids in public schools know they qualify for a scholarship? Are they pre-approved by their private schools?

[Link](#)

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Gwinnett citizen

August 10th, 2009 6:22 pm

Integrating cell phones as tools for learning? Why? We have plenty of technology already available that serves the same purpose. Kids who misuse cell phones in school just tie up valuable teacher and administrator time. Kids cheat with cell phones, they make arrangements to meet in the bathroom to fight and sell drugs, and they "sext". Will kids still cheat, fight, sell drugs, and write obscene notes? Yes, but why make it easier? When an eighth grade girl sends an eighth grade boy a nude picture of herself via cell phone and it gets forwarded to the entire grade level, that interrupts instruction and opens a whole can of worms. Want technology? Use the laptops and computer labs. Leave the cell phones at home. And parents—check your cell phone records to make sure your child isn't using his or her cell phone during school hours.

[Link](#)

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drew (former teacher)

August 10th, 2009 6:36 pm

Catlady...I agree, but allow me some teacher talk here...you're off task!

Before any technology is introduced into the classroom, we should ask ourselves: What problem is going to be solve/addressed with the introduction of this technology?

So, to those advocating the use of cell phones in schools, please explain to me what problem will be solved (or alleviated) by using cell phones in schools?

Surely LReilly can set me straight...since he/she wrote the 6 week online course on it. And don't regurgitate all the things that can be done with cell phones, I have one myself, I'm fairly proficient with it, and I already know what it can do. Just tell me what problem cell phone use in the classroom is intended to address. Thanks!

[Link](#)

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ScienceTeacher671

August 10th, 2009 6:49 pm

I'm still wondering how so many of the kids — even those on free and reduced lunch who might not eat except for the school lunches and breakfasts — have cell phones. In fact, they usually have very nice cell phones, and apparently also have very good voice & texting plans.

And I still think the idea someone here had of a \$1/month tax on cell phones to make up some of the budget deficit was a grand idea.

[Link](#)

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parent and teacher

August 10th, 2009 7:11 pm

I'm an admitted technophile – if someone in my school is going to try something new and fabulous with technology, it's likely to be me – I Facebook, Twitter, blog, podcast, writing java applets, etc. However, I have also found that kids are not nearly as techno-savvy as people like to think. They are decent end-users, but not so good at development. They get software, but don't always get hardware. The technology is great, but if a sound lesson plan isn't amongst all the bells and whistles, the kids are going to be in the same predicament – not getting it.

Although my school's policy is they are not to be seen or heard during the day, I have let my students use cell phones as calculators, let them take pictures of labs, and text summaries to their parents. On the flip side, we have had incidents of cyber-bullying, cheating, and sexting. If kids could be trusted to use the cell phones responsibly, I think more people would be for it – as it is, we already have parents who, when confronted with strong evidence, still deny their child has cheated, as per the other post.

[Link](#)

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Dan

August 10th, 2009 8:19 pm

The reality is there are lots of opportunities to engage technology without the distractions of a

cellphone. So me a cell phone that improves critical thinking, writing, or mathematics skills. Even if a teacher uses the cell phone as a teaching tool, it will also be used for texting and inappropriate behavior.

[Link](#)

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Tyler

August 10th, 2009 10:32 pm

I went to Durham middle school last year and learning there was very fun and easy because every room had a smartboard, projector, student response system, and laser printer, and every 4 teachers shared a laptop cart. We used technology all the time! Everyone benefited from getting to use the tools. Yes, there were teachers who refused to use their equipment, but no one liked them because they made it harder to learn. I loved the 21st century classroom and would love to go back to it!

[Link](#)

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cricket

August 10th, 2009 11:40 pm

As a teacher, I have used my iphone to snap a picture of a student acting like a fool or "pitching a fit". A picture is worth a thousand words when immediately emailed to the parent. After a couple of weeks of this, all I have to do is pick up the darn phone and I have a class full of angels. I love technology!

I just wish we had a live web cam feed for all the parents to view.

[Link](#)

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Jodie

August 11th, 2009 3:41 am

I don't think they are a reasonable choice, not with the harm already being done by them in every aspect of life. <http://mycellphoneiskillingme.com> for examples. And Old Timer is right. I don't think that laptops in class created many Einsteins!!

[Link](#)

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profpeter

August 12th, 2009 3:39 am

Whenever I come across some social, business, or governmental action or activity that, to my close look, just doesn't make any sense, I do what I always do to at least try to figure out the poser. What is that? An old but profoundly true axiom: "follow the money." Who stands to profit the most from increased cellphone use as a form of pedagogy? If every schoolchild has a

cellphone and uses it often to “learn,” both during school and after, who benefits the most? The schoolchildren? The parents? The teachers? The schools?

Nope. The shareholders of AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, T-mobile, US Cellular and all the other cell service providers profit handsomely. So do the manufacturers of the phones themselves.

The kids? They still cannot spell, add, read, or write — chores for which they will have to consume even more technology just to get by as they grow up and (hopefully) enter the work-a-day world. Look closely at what is happening. Follow the money. Come to your own conclusions.

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Rebecca Autrey

August 12th, 2009 8:07 am

Cell phones in the classroom? Rather, cell phones are the new distraction, the latest “toy” the students cannot keep their hands off. Cell phones are a new way to cheat on tests, to spread rumors about and outside the walls of the school, and there has been much discussion about texting’s negative effect on the English language. My child already has a computer, which has almost become a necessity, and a new sixty dollar graphing calculator. Should we really consider adding a luxury item such as a cellphone with a more than basic monthly contract to the school supply list?