



The Preuss School UC San Diego Phone-Free Policy

Purpose

To promote academic focus, social connection, mental well-being, and equitable learning environments, The Preuss School UC San Diego has adopted a comprehensive phone-free policy utilizing the Yondr system. This policy aligns with our mission to prepare scholars for success in college and beyond, while supporting their holistic development in a safe and distraction-free environment.

Rationale

National and international research has shown:

- Social media use exceeding 3 hours daily doubles the risk of anxiety and depression in adolescents.
- Phones in schools are linked to lower academic achievement and classroom performance.
- After adopting Yondr pouches, schools experienced a 14.9% increase in the probability of passing grades and a 44% decrease in behavioral referrals.

The Surgeon General's 2023 advisory concluded that social media may not be safe for developing youth and called for a "safety-first" approach, including stronger boundaries and school-level interventions.

Policy Overview

1. Scope

This policy applies to all middle and high school scholars during instructional hours and while on campus.

2. Implementation

- All scholars will secure their phones, AirPods, and smart watches in **Yondr pouches** upon arrival at school.
- Pouches remain locked during the school day and can only be opened at designated unlocking stations at the end of the school day.
- *Phones remain in the possession of the scholar.*
- Phones may not be accessed or visible between arrival and the end of the school day, including at lunch, breaks, and in restrooms



The Preuss School UC San Diego

Dr. Helen V. Griffith • Superintendent | Dr. Matthew Steitz • Principal

The
**Preuss
School**
UC San Diego

Vice Principals Kamilah Brown and Danielle Agliam
Chief Administrative Officer Jon Host

3. Storage and Responsibility

- Scholars are responsible for properly storing and caring for their assigned pouch.
 - **If a pouch is lost or destroyed, scholars and families will be responsible for the full replacement cost of \$35.**
 - Misuse or tampering with pouches may result in disciplinary consequences.
 - In cases of emergency, communication with parents or guardians will be facilitated through the front office.
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Consequences for Violations

Violations of the phone-free policy will be addressed following The Preuss School's **Restorative Response Matrix**:

- **1st Offense**: Device confiscated; returned to parent/guardian only.
 - **2nd Offense**: Device confiscated; returned to parent/guardian only; and parent-administrator conference.
 - **3rd Offense**: Saturday School and parent-administrator conference and loss of privileges, including extracurriculars and field trips.
 - **Chronic Violations**: May result in suspension.
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Equity and Support

- Scholars requiring phone access due to **documented medical conditions or IEP/504 accommodations** may be granted limited access through the Scholar Services Office.
 - Counseling, family workshops, and digital wellness education will be provided to support families in navigating the phone-free transition.
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Community Commitment

The Preuss School will host family orientation sessions, publish frequently asked questions (FAQs), and maintain open communication to ensure a transparent, supportive rollout.

This policy is rooted in the values of **The Preuss Way**—kindness, respect, and excellence—and reflects our commitment to the well-being and academic success of our scholars.
