



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



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.
