

Dear Middle School Families,

I hope this letter finds you well and that you are enjoying a wonderful summer break. As we prepare for the upcoming school year, I wanted to share some important updates and changes that have been implemented to enhance the learning environment and foster positive social interactions for our middle school students.

During a recent TCAPS Board of Education Meeting, the Board voted in favor of implementing an "Away for the Day" policy, which has shown positive impacts on learning and student interactions in other middle schools. The primary goal of the updated Board Policy 5136 is *"to enrich the learning environment by reducing external distractions, enhancing student focus, and fostering social interactions."*

We kindly request that families have conversations with their child(ren) regarding the new expectations outlined below. TCAPS will actively support students in understanding these changes through informative lessons during the first week of school.

- Phones are to be stored in lockers or backpacks when students arrive on campus until dismissal at 2:35 PM.
- Students cannot use cell phones on campus before the start of 1st hour.
- Earbuds and smartwatches are not permitted at school.

While students are able to access their cell phones and personal electronic devices (PED) on buses, the use of the picture/camera feature is prohibited while a student is being transported in a district owned vehicle, such as a school bus.

We fully recognize the importance of communication between our families and students. To address this, our main office and grade level teams will work diligently to ensure students can make necessary phone calls home throughout the school day. Additionally, for any changes to athletic schedules, coaches and our LEAP office will communicate through Final Forms.

We sincerely appreciate your support and understanding as we implement these changes for the betterment of our students' educational experience. We believe that by minimizing distractions and promoting face-to-face interactions, we can create a more focused and positive learning environment. Your partnership is invaluable to us, and we look forward to a fantastic school year filled with growth and learning for all students.

Sincerely,

John R. VanWagoner II, Ph.D.
Superintendent