



November 28th, 2018

RE: Reflections and Preparations for Student Success during OnTECH's Winter Quarter

Dear OnTECH Parents,

We are very excited start our Winter Quarter this coming Monday, December 3rd!

The OnTECH staff have been reflecting upon the growth we have witnessed this fall, and we are carefully planning the changes necessary to help our students become even more successful this winter. To this end, we will be implementing two very specific changes starting Monday, regarding cell phones and student laptops.

Student Laptops:

We are excited to be able to loan individual laptops to our students for their use for school. This is a privilege and requires that students are responsible and careful with the laptops at all time. Beginning Monday morning, students will be asked to report to the main office to sign out their individual laptops, to be used for the day, and will return them only during lunch and at the end of the day before busses are dismissed. This change is important for two reasons:

1. This allows our students to build personal agency (responsibility) skills necessary for the work environment.
2. This eliminates the time needed to sign laptops in and out during each class, extending the amount of time available for learning.

Student Cell Phones:

Starting this Monday, we will be requiring all students to *not* have their cell phones with them while in class. It has not only been our experience that phones are distracting, but research being conducted across the country teaches us that during the adolescent stage of brain development excessive phone usage can be unhealthy because phones distract from learning, contribute to mental health issues including social anxiety and undermine essential sleep patterns. Help us help your children address these issues.

To eliminate the distractions of phones, we will be requiring all students to adopt **one** of three pathways:

1. **Pathway 1:** Students will provide their phone to administration, while signing out their individual laptop. Phones will be kept locked in the laptop cart, in the slot dedicated to the individual student's laptop. When laptops are returned during lunch, and at the end of the day, phones will be returned and may be used.
2. **Pathway 2:** Parents may choose to keep a student's phone at home, rather than allow it at school. Should the student be found to have both the OnTECH laptop and a cell phone during class, the laptop will be returned and parents will be called for a meeting to discuss phone use with the student. Laptop access will not be restored until such a meeting takes place; however assignments are still expected to be completed.
3. **Pathway 3:** Parents may indicate that the student does not own or have access to a cell phone. Should a student be found in possession of both a phone and laptop, the parent will be called for a meeting. Laptop access will not be restored until such a meeting takes place; however assignments are still expected to be completed.



We greatly appreciate your help as we determine the best methods for teaching our students to be fluent with technology while minimizing the disadvantages associated with the digital age in which their brains are developing. This approach to cell phones will help our students become successful at managing their responsibilities in school, college and in employment.

If you should need to speak with your student, or otherwise communicate with the school during the school day, please call our main office directly at (315) 396-0558. Thank you again for your support and understanding as we continue to improve and iterate into the school community that we are all committed to.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Josh D. Schneider'.

Josh Schneider
Head of Academics
OnTECH Charter High School
www.ontechcharter.com



Parent and Student Cell Phone Agreement

After carefully reading, and discussing the cell phone pathways outlined, the choice that best accommodates our family's needs and values is:

Please Select	Cell Phone Pathways
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pathway 1: My student will provide his/her phone to administration while signing out the required laptop. My student's phone will be kept locked in the laptop cart, in the slot dedicated to the individual student's laptop. When laptops are returned during lunch, and at the end of the day, my student's phone will be returned and may be used.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pathway 2: I choose to keep my student's phone at home, rather than allow it at school. Should my student be found to have both a laptop and a cell phone during class, I understand the laptop will be returned and I will be called for a meeting to discuss phone use with the student. I understand access will not be restored until such a meeting takes place; however I understand that my student is still responsible for his/her assignments.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pathway 3: My student does not own or have access to a cell phone. Should my student be found to have both a phone and a laptop, I understand I will be called for a meeting. I understand that laptop access will not be restored until such a meeting takes place; however I understand that my student is still responsible for his/her assignments.

By signing below, we agree to abide by the terms of the choice selected:

_____ Parent Name (Please Print)	_____ Parent Signature	_____ Date
_____ Additional Parent Name (Please Print)	_____ Additional Parent Signature	_____ Date
_____ Student Name (Please Print)	_____ Student Signature	_____ Date