



PORT JEFFERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT
EARL L. VANDERMEULEN HIGH SCHOOL
PORT JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Jessica Schmettan
Superintendent of Schools

John Ruggero
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Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year!

As we begin another exciting year, we would like to remind everyone that Port Jefferson Middle School and High School will continue to follow New York State's Bell-to-Bell Cell Phone Restriction, which prohibits the use of personal electronic devices during the school day.

Effective immediately, cell phones and personal electronic devices (including smartwatches, earbuds, AirPods, or similar items) at the start of the school day and store them in their lockers until dismissal. must be turned off and stored in student lockers upon arrival at school. Phones may be retrieved at the end of the school day. This policy applies to the entire instructional day, including lunch periods and study halls.

If students are found with a smartphone or a personal electronic device during the school day, they will be assigned an after-school detention from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. the following school day. This will be accompanied by a parent/guardian notification. After two infractions, students will be required to check in their device at the Main Office each morning for a minimum of one month and retrieve it only at dismissal.

This change is rooted in our shared commitment to creating the best possible learning environment for all students. Research has shown that reducing cell phone use during school hours can:

- Improve mental health by lowering stress and anxiety linked to constant notifications and social media pressures.
- Enhance focus and academic performance by eliminating distractions.
- Encourage meaningful in-person interactions between classmates and teachers, fostering stronger relationships and a more connected school community.

We understand that cell phones have become a central part of daily life. However, during school hours, our priority is to ensure students are engaged in learning, present in the moment, and building the social and academic skills they will carry into their futures.

We appreciate your support in helping us make this transition smooth and effective. Together, we can create an environment that prioritizes well-being, deep learning, and genuine human connection.

Thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

John Ruggero

John Ruggero
Principal
Earl L. Vandermeulen High School