



Oswayo Valley Jr./Sr. High School

318 S. Oswayo Street · Shinglehouse, PA 16748

Telephone: 814-260-1701 · Fax: 814-697-6375

Mr. Jed Hamberger

Superintendent

jhamberger@oswayo.com

Mr. Erich Zaun

Principal

ezaun@oswayo.com

Ms. Monica Williams

School Counselor

mwilliams@oswayo.com

Mr. Bill Howard

Director of Activities

bhoward@oswayo.com

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Starting with the 2023-24 school year, Oswayo Valley JSHS will no longer allow students to have cell phones, smart watches, or any other device that allows personal text messaging on their person during school hours. Students will be expected to place these devices in a small personal locker with a built-in combination lock as they enter the building. These separate lockers will be assigned to each individual student at the beginning of the year to ensure that no devices get damaged or stolen throughout the day. Students will then pick up their devices as they are dismissed for the day.

There are several reasons why we are moving in this direction, and they all relate to student safety and academic achievement. Many other school districts, locally and nationally, are struggling with this same battle and have started to move in this direction as it is too difficult to monitor what is truly happening on these devices. It has been found that students across the country have been utilizing these devices in ways that compromise the safety of other students and themselves, such as cyberbullying others, setting up physical altercations, discussing drug and alcohol use on/off school grounds, and viewing material that is highly inappropriate for their ages. It has also been found that more students are cheating on assignments and not engaging in classroom activities properly. Lastly, cell phone addiction has many negative side effects and we do not want to enable our students to develop these unhealthy habits.

As we start the year, it is important that everyone knows the expectations and also the consequences for when they are not followed. The included graphic describes the progression of consequences if a student does not adhere to the guidelines. This will be paired with positive reinforcement opportunities for those students that do follow the expectations. Although many students may not like these new rules, we also want to make it as positive as possible as the year progresses.

There are some points of clarification to address as we roll this out. First, student-parent communication can still happen, but must be done through the office. If a student needs to contact home, they just need to use the phone that is in the office, and if a parent needs to talk with their child, they can call the main office and we will call the student down. Next, students that must leave school early will have access to their phone to take with them. This would include items like sport departures, CTC students, doctor appointments, etc. Lastly, we recognize that students need to learn how to self-manage their usage of cell phones, but it is an undertaking that is too large for us to do alone, as so many factors are out of our hands. We are aware that there will be many questions and/or concerns that stem from these new expectations, so please feel free to reach out to me at any point.

Thank you,

Erich Zaun

Mission: "Inspiring, developing, and empowering life-long learners to enrich the world"

An Equal Opportunity Employer