

## Cell phone technology needed in CPS

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In Tara Malone and Lisa Black's article "Cell phones increasingly a class act," (Oct. 11) we learn suburban school districts are starting to experiment with [cell phones](#) in class. I am a member of the Mikva Challenge Education Council and we are advocating for the same new policies in [Chicago Public Schools](#). In September, we met with CEO [Ron Huberman](#) and gave him our top ideas for bringing CPS into the 21st century via technology. Among those suggestions was, "Cell phones should be allowed during passing periods, lunch and as a teacher-defined learning tool (e.g. as for research, surveying students)." We spent more than 120 hours this past summer researching how technology can improve education.

In a survey we conducted of 380 CPS students, we found that 86 percent of students were bringing their cell phones to school even though it is against the policy. Our data matches that of the Pew Research Center data cited in Malone and Black's article.

CEO Huberman thought our report had many great ideas but said that he will not be changing the CPS cell phone policy anytime soon. As of now it is in the hands of individual principals to allow their teachers to innovate. Principals at Von Steuben and Whitney Young have made some changes to their policies. We want more principals to allow cell phones in their schools.

It is not easy to change educational practice but with students more engaged with the devices in their pockets than learning, perhaps it is time to take a serious look at how these devices can work with education instead of against it.

Read our [report](#). Watch our [movie](#).

-- *Karina De La Rosa, Chicago*