


**Subject:** Cell Phones
**Effective Date:** TBD Upon Board Approval
**Approved By:** Board of Directors
**Policy:** 6002.1

## I. Policy

School employees may be provided with a cell phone stipend or a school cell phone and service contract as a condition of employment. Employees are eligible for these benefits based on the need of the school and following a set of criteria.

## II. Determining Eligibility

The following criteria will determine the authorization of a school-owned cellular telephone:

Field Personnel – Individuals who are consistently required by the nature of their job to be away from their office telephone more than 8 hours per week.

Telecommuting Personnel – Those employees with specific, written authorization to work at least 8 hours from home.

Site Leadership Personnel/"First Responders" – Site supervisors who are tasked to respond in the event of a crisis at the school or those who will respond in their stead.

## III. Benefits Process

HR will inform employees regarding their eligibility and manage their election of these benefits. The Superintendent (or designee) may authorize additional benefits on a case by case basis, based on school need.

To accurately track the usage of telecommunications equipment including data cards, cell phones, and desk phones, all purchase and maintenance responsibilities are centralized in the IT Department. Further, the IT Department is tasked with establishing procurement, delivery and inventory processes that ensure adequate internal controls. These processes will be written and available for all employees.

**IV. Telecommunication Benefits Process**

Managers will refer to the "Supplemental Benefits Eligibility" grid when hiring a new employee to determine for which benefits the new employee is eligible. The employee's PAN form should reflect the benefits established in the grid. Requests for additional benefits must be made by the supervisor directly to the Superintendent.

**V. Cell Phone Stipend Procedures**

Certain employees are eligible only for the cell phone stipend. This amount will be deposited monthly into the employee's paycheck and will be subject to tax and STRS/PERS. Other employees may choose EITHER a cell phone stipend OR a school-provided cell phone. If the employee chooses the stipend, that employee may not charge any additional costs related to their cell phone use, including the expense of minute overages, long distance calls on behalf of the school or accessories for personal cell phones.

**VI. Procedures for School-Purchased Cell Phones**

Cell phone service provided to an employee is primarily for business use, and may be used for personal reasons only in emergency circumstances. Business use is defined as any use in the course of performing specific job-related duties on behalf and for the benefit of Vista Springs Charter School.

**VII. Procedures for School-Provided Data Cards**

Employees who have school laptops or who are collecting a technology stipend have the option of getting a school-provided data card. If the school data card is elected, the technology stipend is forfeited.

**VIII. Additional Cell Phone Procedures**

Only when authorized by the IT Department head and the employee's supervisor, are employees allowed to directly acquire additional accessories or replacements. All needed accessories or replacements will be handled through a Telephone Service Request.

New authorizations for cellular telephones will be approved only for employees who can show a work-related need.

Any request for a cellular phone, other than the phone provided to the school, must be thoroughly justified. The acquisition of special cellular phones, i.e. those connecting to modems, must be on a special-needs basis.

The employee's supervisor is responsible for collecting the cell phone or other telecommunication devices in the event that the employee is no longer employed by the school.

All cellular phone requests, repairs or replacements must be submitted on a Telephone Service Request (found at the IT department website under "Forms"). If additional information or approval is needed, a representative from the IT department will contact the department director. Special requests require approval of the department director.

Changes in the individual holding the position for which an authorization has been approved will be submitted to the IT department so that billing records can be updated.

Text message on school cell phones is not allowed due to E-Rate restrictions. If text messages are sent or accepted, the employee will be billed for the expense.

The Finance department will review cell phone bills each month to watch for unusual expenses, including text messages, ring tones, or long distance calls.

**IX. Considerations**

Employees are responsible to commute to various job sites, including Vista Springs' sites and Vista Springs' parents' homes. We expect employees to operate their vehicles in a safe and prudent manner, and therefore, employees should refrain from using cellular phones while driving.