

The "Smart Students, Not Smart Phones" video was created to reinforce Harford County Public Schools' (HCPS) cell phone policy that was enacted in March, 2024. The video was aimed at reminding parents and staff that it is actively being implemented. The video uses humor and role reversal-where a young student plays the teacher and HCPS leadership plays distracted students-to highlight the importance of limiting phone use in the classroom. This engaging approach makes the message more relatable and memorable. The target audience for this video is parents and school staff, emphasizing the shared responsibility of enforcing the policy to ensure student success. By directing the message to adults, the video encourages both at-home and in-school reinforcement of expectations, creating a consistent and supportive environment for students. To maximize its reach, the video was distributed across multiple platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, and a district-wide mass email sent to the entire HCPS community. Social media ensured broad engagement, while email delivery helped guarantee that key stakeholders-especially parents-received the message directly. The video supports effective communication by simplifying what locally has been a controversial topic into a lighthearted yet impactful message. Instead of relying on written policies or formal announcements, the visual storytelling makes the policy easier to understand and more engaging. The use of HCPS leaders in student roles reinforces their commitment to the policy, showing that it applies to everyone. The freeze-frame explanation by Jillian Lader further clarifies the specifics, ensuring there is no confusion about what the policy entails. The video has achieved several key outcomes:

- Increased awareness: By leveraging multiple communication channels, the video ensured that a broad audience received clear, consistent information about the policy.
- Reinforced policy implementation: The humorous yet firm messaging reminded staff and parents that the policy is not just in place but actively enforced.
- Encouraged community support: The relatable storytelling approach helped shift the perception of the policy from being a restriction to being a tool for student success.
- Improved student focus: By ensuring parents and staff are aligned on enforcement, the policy's benefits-reduced distractions and increased student engagement-are more effectively realized in classrooms.

By combining humor, creativity, and clear messaging, the "Smart Students, Not Smart Phones" video successfully

engaged the HCPS community, strengthened policy awareness, and encouraged a collective effort to maintain focused learning environments.