

## Boston High Schools Ban Cellphones: Violators Will Have Phones Temporarily Confiscated

Steven Macone

*The Daily Free Press (Boston U.)*

BOSTON (CUP) — If Zack Morris were a Boston public school student, his brick-sized cellphone would be a ticket to Mr. Belding's office.

Boston public school students could have their cellphones confiscated if their phones are turned on or are visible during school hours, according to a new Boston School Committee policy.

"Everyone is aware that the use of cell phones has exploded," said Boston School Committee chair Elizabeth Reilinger. "It's a problem at all age levels now."

Students, teachers, administrators and parents alike have complained about cellphone disruptions, Reilinger said.

The policy states a student's cellphone will be temporarily confiscated if it is not out of sight and turned off — not merely set to silent or vibrate — on school grounds during school hours. Upon subsequent offences, students would be barred from bringing their cellphones to school for the remainder of the school year.

Members of the Boston Student Advisory Council assisted in the process and pushed for stricter measures, Reilinger said.

She added the old rules, which varied from school to school, were "fragmented across the system."

"What we wanted to do was standardize it so everyone knows what the rules of the game are," Reilinger said.

Brighton High School student Claudina Barros said the new policy "sucks," but she thinks it will have little impact on student behaviour.

"Kids usually keep them on," Barros said. "If I see someone coming down the hallway, I'll put it away."

Barros said a similar policy is already in place at Brighton High School and she was suspended this year for one day after her cellphone was seen. She said cellphone use is not a serious problem in school compared to fighting, for example.

The policy applies to all levels of Boston public school students. Boston University education student Kate McCabe, a student teacher at Revere High School, said although the school prohibits cellphone use, students text message each other test answers and accept phone calls in class.

"They do not want to be separated from their phones," McCabe said. "Their phones are a symbol of status. With the types of phones they have, you can tell who is where on the totem pole."

Joyce Morgan, University of Massachusetts at Boston interim assistant dean of student affairs, said she was not aware of any intentions to create a policy that would regulate cellphone use at the post-secondary level.

"It's not a problem I've encountered in my judicial role," Morgan said, adding cellphone etiquette among college students is generally understood.

East Boston High School student Leesha White said she has been reprimanded often for using her cellphone in class.

"It's stupid," White said. "Without your cellphone in class, what else is there?"

## Online Security Breaches At PSE Institutions On The Rise

Michael Sitayeb

*Excalibur (York University)*

TORONTO (CUP) — Post-secondary institutions across North America are falling behind in protecting against rising Internet security risks that could cripple entire networks.

A series of high profile incidents, disruptions and unauthorized exposure of data have rocked institutions at the University of Texas, Berkeley, Nipissing University and several others.

"In higher education, the overall record has been spotty," says Bob Gagne, executive director of computer and network services at York University.

"Not much time passes before you hear about a story of unauthorized access to information."

Universities and other corporations encountered about 160,000 security threats and attacks in 2004. This number has increased dramatically from less than 10,000 in 1995.

Yet most universities still lack a rigorous and appropriately tested disaster-recovery plan to cope with any security breach.

"There are many reasons why universities have been lagging [behind] the corporate world in addressing the issue of Internet security," says Gagne. Several challenges contribute to making universities a difficult place to secure.

"We have everything you can find in universities. Wireless laptops, office computers, massive high-performance research machines and residence PCs," says Gagne.

Academic institutions tend to have a more traditional culture of openness, particularly their academic "Internet", which contributes heavily to security vulnerabilities. The decentralized nature of institutions is also a problem in managing security.

Chris Russel, manager of information security at York, strongly

disagrees with the notion that universities are falling behind other corporations in North America when it comes to dealing with the Internet security risks. However, he does see some issues with York's Internet security.

"The vast majority of security incidents that we deal with stem from having a large wireless network and residence population having a lot of unmanaged computers on our network," says Russel.

A program called York Security Scan was developed in collaboration with University of Toronto and University of New Brunswick to address the problem. The program is designed to scan all computers for viruses or other problems and correct them when they log onto the school's network.

Computers on the residence networks use YSS to scan for any culprit viruses and security threats.

"Before you register for the residence network service you must pass a number of security checks to sign-in, [which] makes sure the machine is clean of viruses and up to date with security patches and anti-virus software," explains Russel.

"We're further strengthening wireless networks, extending the YSS to cover the wireless networks and a number of other measures [that] are being considered," he adds.

Over the past year, York has had some success in reducing the number of incidents of security threats on computers in its residences.

Last year, York reported around 450 security threats on residence computers in September. This year, there were only 100. The university usually sees a spike in security threats in September, when the school

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