



Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish School
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Dear OLGC Parish School Families,

We feel an urgent need to write to you today about a matter that is prevalent in our culture and is increasingly becoming problematic in our school community. In this day and age, many of our students have electronic devices that they can use to communicate with others. Most students want these devices because they want to make new social connections, keep relationships with friends and family members, and have access to information or interactions with others who share their interests. With that being said, there are many dangers involved with our children having such devices in the palms of their hands. The issues raised by cellphones are rampant in our culture today, and our school is not insulated from these threats.

If you have chosen to place a cellphone in the hands of your child, we beg you to not be naïve in thinking that your child would not fall into the devastation of sin. Though your intention of giving your child a phone was harmless, you just gave your child a porthole to violence and sexual exploitation that would have been unthinkable when we were young. It is simply unrealistic to think that our children living in a pornographic culture will not get curious and look at things that will have disastrous consequences, potentially for years to come. Researchers are stating that a child's first exposure to pornographic images is the age of eleven.

In the midst of all this bad news, we are mindful that God is bringing something to our attention in our community to help our young people grow to be mature, responsible men and women, and to encourage us as parents to support one another.

While we know this topic is not new to you as parents and has been discussed with our students, we find it important to reiterate the importance of monitoring your child's cellphone and other electronic devices. We beg every parent to watch "[Late Night with Fr. John](#)" in which ProtectYoungEyes [<https://protectyoungeyes.com>] founder, Chris McKenna, gives key ways for parents to guide their children in this digital age. In our opinion, this is the single best presentation on this topic that we have hosted, and he offers practical advice and resources to support you.

As Catholic educators, it is our role to help guide you and support you in protecting and forming your children as Christian disciples. But we can only do that while they are at school. Our cellphone policy remains zero-tolerance in order to prevent any sort of inappropriate behavior from occurring on school property or during school hours. We also use strict internet filtering software in order to limit the instances of students having access to inappropriate content. But according to some studies, 90 percent of the 8 to 16 year-olds who have viewed online porn did so while completing homework.

Please recognize the devastation occurring everywhere in our culture and commit to removing occasions of sin, devastating habits of life, and violations of the law for your children. Please consider cutting down social media usage and making a commitment to actively monitor your child's activity or eliminating usage all together. Please pray for God's light to shine amidst this trial and for His healing power, repentance and cleansing to occur. May we trust that God is in control and respond in the way He is calling us.

In Christ's Love,

Fr. John Riccardo, Pastor

Melissa Hunt, Principal

Mission Statement:

We exist to offer a life-changing encounter with Jesus and equip leaders to transform the culture.