

My name is Dean Liptak, and I'm writing this letter to tell my side of the situation involving my use of a cell phone jammer in my classroom. My intent for using the device was to keep students academically focused on schoolwork. It is counter productive to stop instruction and lose academic focus when I have to tell a student to put his or her cell phone away. It is also unproductive to confiscate a cell phone, put it in the school-approved box and keep it until the end of the period. This is our school policy, and if a student refuses to relinquish his or her cell phone, I have to write a referral and lose additional academic focus in my classroom. Moreover, if a student has too many referrals, the student is not permitted to attend extra school activities, which I believe is important to achieve academic success.

Before buying the cell phone jammer I did conduct research. First when looking online to buy one, I found 18 sites. These 18 sites comprised the first two pages. I found out that are being sold on Amazon and there are videos on how to make them on You Tube. I found that they are being used in universities, schools, churches and businesses, but I still did more research because I didn't want to do anything that was illegal. In addition to the research that I conducted, I talked to a deputy on the police force, and he said, "There are no state laws against using them as long as you don't use them for malicious intent." In fact he said "businesses in the county use them such as Citrus Memorial Hospital. They use them on their I.C.U. floor because cell phones interfere with some of their equipment. He also said that he talked to his sergeant about them, who told him there are no state laws against using them, and that it is only illegal to sell them.

We discussed how there would be a landline in the front of my room on my desk, and I could hit the off button if there was any type of emergency and the phone signals would instantly activate. After putting the device in my room, I set it for ten meters and walked around the outside of my room with my phone to make sure it didn't interfere with any other classroom in the school, and it did not.

When I was told that the device was creating a problem outside my classroom, I immediately turned it off and removed it from my classroom that day and stated that I would not use it again. My intent was never to create problems but to keep students academically focused in the classroom.

No teacher or student knew I had the device, but since the incident has happen so, so, so many teachers have come up to me and said that they were thinking of getting one and using it in their class room, which I told them "NO, don't do that! Their not allowed. I think the county needs to address the use of these devices because so many teachers are thinking of using them to combat a huge problem that's taking place in our county schools.

As far as using poor judgment and violating the Code of Ethics State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.001 (2) that is a very subjective statement, especially when there is nothing specific about using these types of devises. I do think I should have gone to my administrators first to discuss the use of this device; there were no malicious intention on my part. I only wanted to keep the students academically focus.

Dean Liptak