

To support school environments in which students can fully engage with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the Board of Education of Elida Local School District has determined the use of cell phones and other personal communication devices by students during school hours is not permitted.

The objective of this policy is to strengthen Elida Local School's focus on learning, in alignment with our mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools.

For purposes of this policy, "personal communication device" (PCD) includes computers, tablets, electronic readers, cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, and any other web-enabled device of any type, unless they are school issued.

I. Research

Research shows that student use of cell phones in schools has negative effects on student performance and mental health. Cell phones, in particular, distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in smaller learning gains and lower test scores. Increased cell phone use has led to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in children.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to the use of cell phones and all other PCD's (such as watches, tablets, etc.) by students while on school property during school hours.

III. Use of personal communication devices

Students are prohibited from using cell phones and other devices at all times during the school day, including while on school sanctioned field trips.

IV. Exception

Nothing in this policy prohibits a student from using a cell phone or other personal communication device for a purpose documented in the student's individualized education program developed under Chapter 3323 of the Ohio Revised Code or a plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 U.S.C. 794. However, prior to possessing and using these in school, parents and/or students shall initiate a conversation with the building principal and the special education director to make sure all parties are on the same page regarding use, storage, etc.

Students with health concerns that require the use of a personal communication device shall also have prior approval granted by the building administrator and building nurse.

Also, students taking college credit plus courses may require the use of personal communication devices for authentication or course requirements. These shall be communicated and approved with the building principal in advance.

In each of the instances mentioned above, the building principal will share the names of students who are provided with these exceptions to staff in their buildings.

Students may only use their personal communication devices for the express reason that an exception has been made, and does not give them permission to access their devices for any other reason.

V. Cell phone/device Storage

Students shall keep their cell phones (or PCD) powered off in a secure place, such as the student's locker, a closed backpack, or in their locked vehicles, at all times when cell phone use is prohibited. This goes for all PCD's.

VI. Discipline

All students are given a verbal warning on the first day of school regarding the policy and consequences listed below. If a student violates this policy, a teacher or administrator shall take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures:

- Place the student's cell phone (or PCD) in the school's building central office for the remainder of the school day. In the high school, this will be in the Academic Office. Student's may retrieve their device at the end of the school day for a first offense and let them know that the next incident will a parent/guardian to retrieve it.
- Place the student's cell phone (or PCD) in the school's central office to be picked up by the student's parent/guardian (or someone listed on the student's emergency contact list, if approved by the parent/guardian, one time only). In the high school this will be in the Academic Office.
- Further violations will result in additional discipline, up to and including suspension from school.
- ❖ Any student failing to immediately relinquish their cell phone when requested by administration or creates a disturbance/disruption may receive additional discipline up to and including suspension.