

Columbia Elementary Electronic Device Policy

Scope

Electronic devices have become a common means of communication and information. However, these devices have the potential of disrupting the orderly operation of the school. The school has therefore created this policy to govern the possession and use of electronic devices on school premises, during school hours, at school-sponsored activities, and on school transportation.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, "Electronic Device" means a privately owned device that is used for audio, image or video capturing, text communication (or recording), or any other type of computer or computer-like instrument. Electronic Devices may include but are not limited to:

- Existing and emerging mobile communication systems, and smart technologies (cell phones, smartwatches, walkie-talkies, portable internet devices, word processing devices, handheld entertainment systems (video games, audio players, etc.); and any other convergent communication technologies that do any number of the previously mentioned functions.
- Current or emerging wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

Possession and Use

Students may possess and use electronic devices at school subject to the following:

- Students may carry or possess electronic devices at school and school-sponsored activities. Electronic devices must be completely powered down, turned off, and kept in backpacks during the hours of 8:45am – 3:25pm. Electronic devices may not be left on in vibrating mode.
- At no time may electronic devices be used in restrooms.

Prohibitions

Electronic devices shall not be used in a way that threatens, humiliates, harasses, or intimidates school-related individuals, including students, employees, and visitors, or violates local, state, or federal law.

Electronic devices may not be used during academic assessments unless specifically permitted as outlined in this plan and by assessment directions.

Camera or audio recording functions of electronic devices may pose threats to the personal privacy of individuals, used to exploit personal information, and/or compromise the integrity of educational programs. Accordingly, the use of the audio recording or camera functions of electronic devices are strictly prohibited on school premises.

Confiscation

If a student violates this policy, the electronic device may be confiscated. When an employee confiscates an electronic device under this policy, they will take reasonable measures to label and secure the device and turn the device over to a school administrator as soon as the employee's duties permit. At the administrator's discretion, parents may be required to retrieve the device from the office in person following a policy review. The school does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to the device.

Potential Disciplinary Actions

Students violating this policy will have disciplinary consequences consistent with the Columbia Elementary school-wide discipline policy. Also, a student who violates this policy may be prohibited from possession of an electronic device at school or school-related events.

Infraction of this policy may result in a student being suspended, expelled, or referred to the police.

Security of Devices

Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of electronic devices brought to school. The school shall not assume responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or unauthorized calls made with an electronic device. If devices are loaned to or borrowed and misused by non-owners, device owners are jointly responsible for the misuse or policy violation(s).

Exceptions

In considering our educational purposes, safety issues, and student privacy rights (FERPA)...

- Smartwatches may be allowed as a timekeeping and GPS tracking device, but other features must be disabled during school hours as outlined in this policy.

With prior approval of the principal, an exception to one or more of the above prohibitions may be made under the following circumstances:

- The use is specifically required to implement a student's approved, current, and valid IEP, 504, or Health Plan.
- The use is at the direction of a teacher/principal for educational purposes or is determined by the principal to be necessary for other special circumstances, such as appropriately authorized health, safety, or emergency reasons.