

Williston Cell Phone Policy

2024-2025

Expectation: During the school day (arrival to school through 3:40pm) students are expected to keep their personal devices turned off and put away in their book bags unless there is a documented accommodation for a student. (IEP, EAP, 504)

Why? When students are at school, we want them to be fully engaged in their learning and with face to face social communication. Personal devices often interfere and interrupt their learning and the learning of those around students. Recently, the US Surgeon General has issued a warning that social media use by children and teens can “pose a profound risk of harm” to their mental health and well being.

How is “personal device” defined?

- Any portable electronic device including, but not limited to, cellular and wireless phones, digital cameras, tablets, e-readers, smartphones, laptops, WiFi-enabled or broadband access devices, and devices that allow a person to record, access and/or transmit on either a real time or delayed basis, data, sound, video or still images, text, or other information.
 - This includes phones, smart watches, tablets, laptops, headphones, and similar devices that are not school issued.

When are personal devices permitted to be used?

- Students may access personal devices before they enter the school building for the school day and after announcements at 3:40 pm.
- When there is a change in after-school activity that happens the same day, an announcement will be made allowing students to temporarily use their phones or a classroom to contact their caretakers and notify them of the change.

When are personal devices NOT permitted to be used?

- Students may NOT access personal devices at any time during the school day. (7:55 am - 3:40 pm)

How can families get in touch with their students during the school day?

- Our front office is staffed between 7:55 am and 4:00pm. Parents can call and leave messages for their student(s). Messages will be delivered to the student.
- If a student needs to call home, they can use the front office phone during their lunch/recess time.

How can families support their students in this area?

- Please support our efforts by not expecting your student to access their phone during the day. If there is an emergency, you can contact them through the school office.
- Consider using parental controls by only allow the most essential apps for communication or instruction during the school day (turn off all other notifications, badges and alerts)
- If your child does not currently have a device, consider your ability/willingness to monitor it before purchasing one. There is no school-based need for a smartphone or device.
- If you do feel that your student needs a phone, you do not need to purchase a smartphone. For phone calls and texting, a phone that is not connected to the internet is appropriate and available from all carriers.
- Students can bring devices to school to let families know they have arrived, or about after school plans. They just cannot access the device during the school day.

Matrix of Consequences for Misuse of Devices

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3+ Offenses
Possession (<i>visible</i>)	Verbal redirection; minor incident entered; device confiscated ; Parent can pick up at the end of the day.	Verbal redirection, parent contacted; minor incident entered; phone placed in front office for parent pick up ; parent meeting held to develop a plan moving forward.	Verbal redirection, parent contacted; major incident entered; phone placed in front office for parent pick up ; parent meeting held to develop a plan moving forward. ISS assigned.
Active Use (<i>impacting a single person - playing a game, viewing social media, checking sports updates, etc.</i>)	Device confiscated ; minor incident entered; Parent can pick up at the end of the day.	Device confiscated , major incident entered, parent contacted by office, device pick up by parent, Lunch and Learn assigned.	Device confiscated ; major incident entered; 1-3 Days of ISS assigned; parent must come to retrieve device and parent meeting held to develop plan moving forward.
Hinderance (<i>interfering with the learning environment - videoing someone or something, texting another person, posting on social media - impacting another person in some way</i>) (<i>any use in a restroom</i>)	Device confiscated ; major incident entered; Parent can pick up at the end of the day; parent meeting held to develop plan moving forward; Consequence assigned.	Device Confiscated ; major incident entered; 1-3 days of ISS assigned	Device confiscated ; major incident entered; 1-5 days of OSS assigned; parent meeting held; student not permitted to bring device on campus for the duration of the school year.

References and Resources

- [The Case for Making the Classroom Cell Phone Free](#)
- [Get Phones Out of School Now](#)
- [Social media use and depression in adolescence: a scoping review](#)
- [Does Social Media Use Cause Depression?](#)
- [Cellphones in School: What to Know](#)
- [Wait Until 8th](#)