

# Committee Feedback

## Statement of our WHY?:

At Pocatello School District 25, we understand the critical role technology plays in today's educational landscape. However, we also recognize that personal electronic communication devices, such as but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, tablets, etc., can present distractions that hinder our mission to Think, Be, and Learn More Together. With mounting evidence showing that unrestricted access to these devices can negatively impact students' emotional well-being, safety, and academic progress, we are committed to creating an environment where focus, engagement, and personal growth take precedence.

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## Definitions:

Personal Electronic Communication Device - defined as any privately-owned electronic device that is used for communication or accessing information. This includes, but is not limited to, smartphones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches, and similar devices that can send or receive messages, make calls, access the internet, or connect to social media.

School Day – School day is defined as the official start time to the official end time including class periods, passing periods, recess and assemblies. For activities that take place off-campus when students are normally in school, such as field trips, trip-specific personal electronic device regulations will be established by the trip facilitator.

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## Policy:

The use of personal electronic devices during instructional time is strictly prohibited in all district schools. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, e-readers, laptops, or other related electronic devices. Earbuds? smart rings?

During the School Day - Students must keep their devices turned off, out of sight, and not on their person while on school campuses or at school activities for the duration of the school day. Personal electronic devices may be stored in a backpack, locker, or a designated spot in the classroom. **The only exception is that high school students may use their devices during their lunch periods at school only.**

Use of personal electronic devices is a privilege and not a right. Students are required to adhere to requirements outlined in this policy.

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### Inappropriate use of cell phones added language:

The use of cameras or audio recording on any type of electronic device is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms and any area where personal privacy is assumed. Use of cameras or audio recordings are also prohibited in classrooms, unless specifically authorized by the student's teacher. When the use of a camera or audio recording is authorized, students are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph, video or audio recording of any individual, and are required to obtain the individual's or their parent's permission prior to posting such content to any internet or social media site or app.

Students shall comply with any additional rules developed by the school concerning appropriate use of telecommunication or other electronic devices.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary measures, such as forfeiting device privileges on school grounds, detention, suspension, or expulsion and confiscation of the device.

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### Protection:

Students are responsible for safeguarding all personal devices. The district shall not be responsible for loss, damage or theft of personal devices. District personnel are not responsible for providing technical support for personal devices.

The requirements outlined in this policy shall not apply if they conflict with a student's 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

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## Procedures:

### Why:

Pocatello/Chubbuck School District 25 is dedicated to cultivating an educational environment that prioritizes mental health, academic achievement, and character growth. Our aim is to create a school culture where students are fully engaged, free from distractions, and actively involved in their learning journey. We strive to ensure that every student can thrive in a supportive, focused atmosphere.

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### Expectation for:

#### **Students:**

- Follow the cell phone policy by keeping phones, watches and other personal electronic communication devices powered off and out of sight and not on their person during school hours. Devices may be stored in a backpack, locker or designated spot in the classroom. The only exception is that high school students may use their devices during their lunch periods at school.
- Respect the rules regarding phone usage and understand the purpose behind them.
- Personal earbuds and headphones are prohibited.

#### **Parents/Guardians:**

- Contact the school's main office for urgent communication with their child, with the office facilitating communication with the classroom teacher. Parent's/guardians should not expect to communicate with their children using personal communication devices during the school day.
- Parents who need to communicate with their child in the case of an emergency, should call the front office and communicate with the school personnel about the nature of the emergency. As appropriate, this will be communicated to the student impacted by the emergency.

#### **Staff:**

- Supervise students to ensure cell phones are not visible during school hours.
- Set a positive example by demonstrating appropriate phone usage.
- Consistently enforce the policy, collaborating with families when issues arise.
- Substituting instructional activities with personal communication devices is prohibited. Including allowing them to be used as a reward or during "free-time"
- Confiscated devices will be turned into the school office as soon as possible and no later than the end of the school day in which the device is confiscated.

#### **Administration:**

- Support staff in enforcing the policy consistently across the school.
- Handle violations in accordance with the outlined procedures, including communicating with parents/guardians when necessary.

- Review the policy to ensure its effectiveness and adjust as needed based on feedback from the school community.
- Implement progressive discipline if policy violations persist.

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## Discipline Procedure for Electronic Communication Device Policy Violations

### **Purpose:**

Establish a fair and consistent process for addressing breaches of the school district's electronic communications device policy, promoting responsible cell phone use for an optimal learning environment.

### **First Violation: Verbal Warning and Device Confiscation**

The student receives a verbal warning from staff and the device is confiscated and stored in the main office, retrievable by the student or parent. The parent/guardian will be contacted by school administration if needed.

### **Second Violation: Continued Confiscation and Parent Involvement**

The device is confiscated and stored in the main office, retrievable solely by the parent/guardian. Documented in Infinite Campus.

### **Subsequent offenses:**

The phone will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian. A meeting with the student, parent/guardian, and an administrator will be scheduled.

The district will use reasonable care to safeguard confiscated devices by designating a locked storage area, but does not assume liability in the event that the device is lost, stolen or damaged.

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## Extensions for Students with IEPs, 504 Plans and Health Plans:

Students with IEPs, 504 plans, or Health Plans that necessitate the use of an electronic device as part of their accommodation will be allowed to use their devices in accordance with their plan. These students will work with school administrators to establish a clear plan for device usage that supports their learning and well-being.

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## Additional Guidelines:

Noncompliance: Failure to surrender the device upon request is considered insubordination, warranting immediate intervention by school administration.

## Emergency Situations:

**In cases of emergency necessitating immediate access to personal communication devices, the school staff may address on a case-by-case basis, exercising discretion.**

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