

Students

SUBJECT: INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

This policy has been established with input from stakeholders, to ensure compliance with New York State Education law and to promote a safe and distraction-free learning environment for all students.

Definitions:

- **Internet-Enabled Devices** means and includes any interactive devices including but not limited to: cellular devices, smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones (and other wearable devices), or other devices that currently exist or may exist in the future that can connect to the Internet and enable the user to access content online. It does not include non-internet-enabled devices which are not capable of connecting to the internet or enable the user to access content on the internet or internet-enabled devices supplied by the District or a BOCES that are used for an educational purpose.
- **School Day** means the entirety of every instructional day including all of the student's instructional and non instructional time, such as homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and time between classes.
- **School Grounds** means in or on, or within any building, structure, athletic field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of any school in the District.

General Policy Statement:

The use of internet-enabled devices by students is strictly prohibited during the school day anywhere on school grounds, except as specifically permitted in this policy.

Device Storage Guidelines:

- **Chester Elementary School (Grades PreK-5):** Internet-enabled devices and other personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in lockers or backpacks for the entire school day.
- **Chester Academy (Grades 6-12):** Internet-enabled devices and other personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in lockers or backpacks during the school day.

Exceptions:

Students may use School-issued electronic devices (such as chromebooks) during the school day for instructional purposes.

The following non-instructional use may be permitted in the following limited circumstances:

- When necessary for the management of a student’s documented healthcare needs, upon review of the documentation by the District Medical Director, and their approval.
- In the event of an emergency, only as directed by school administration, to minimize risks, and prevent the spread of misinformation.
- When otherwise required by law, such as when use is required by a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.

Parent/Guardian and Student Communication During the School Day:

- Parents/Guardians who need to contact their child during the school day may do so by contacting the School’s main office by telephone to relay an urgent message to a student during the school day. They may also contact the following personnel by telephone:
 - Principal
 - Assistant Principal
 - School Counselor
 - School Psychologist
 - School Social Worker
 - School Nurse
- All classrooms are equipped with telephones, allowing staff to communicate with the Main Office or reach parents/guardians as needed. In the event of a personal emergency, students may request access to a school telephone in the main office or authorized location to contact their parent/guardian during the school day.
- In the event of a school emergency, families will be notified through ParentSquare (or similar portal) which includes voice calls, text messages, and emails.

The district emergency contact information will be published on the district website and updated annually.

Disciplinary Considerations

It is the District’s goal to help students build responsible digital habits through clear expectations and supportive accountability. The Code of Conduct will include disciplinary infractions related to possession and use of Internet-enabled devices. A student will not be suspended solely for accessing an Internet-enabled device in violation of this policy. Students may, however, be suspended for the inappropriate use of such devices (such as threatening, vulgar or sexual messages), the use of these devices as weapons, or for violation of the District’s Acceptable Use Policy.

Privacy

The Board of Education prohibits any form of photography, or video recording of any individual on school property or in school facilities without that individual's knowledge, as well as the dissemination of any photograph or recording without the individual's permission. In no event shall any student photograph or record in a zone where an individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy, including but not limited to locker rooms, lavatories, and Nurse's office.

Responsibility

The decision to bring electronic devices to school or school sponsored events rests with the individual student and his/her parents/guardians and therefore the responsibility for such devices rests solely with the individual student. The School District assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever in the event that an electronic device is damaged, misplaced or stolen during the school day, when on school property or when in attendance at a school sponsored event, whether on or off school property.

Policy Publication

This policy will be made available on the District's website and distributed annually and/or digitally accessible to students, staff, and families no later than August 1, 2025 and prior to the start of each school year.

District Code of Conduct on School Grounds
Chester Union Free School District Student Handbook

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