

SUBJECT: Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices During the School Day Pursuant to NY Education Law § 2803

I. OVERVIEW:

This policy establishes a uniform district-wide protocol concerning the use of personal electronic devices by students during the school day on school grounds, in accordance with Section § 2803 of the New York State Education Law. This policy aims to foster an environment conducive to learning while allowing for necessary and legally supported exceptions.

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply...

- A. "Personal Electronic Devices" refer to any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications, but do not include any such device supplied by the district for educational purposes. Other personal electronic devices include devices which are not capable of connecting to the internet and access content on the internet, fitness trackers, wired or wireless headphones and earbuds, e-readers, calculators, voice recorders, cameras and music devices. These devices can create significant distraction to the school environment, negatively impact student mental health, contribute to disciplinary infractions, and reduce student engagement. Additionally, in an emergency, the use of personal electronic devices can distract students from following the directions of staff or emergency responders, contribute to the spread of misinformation, create congestion in the emergency response system, and interfere with the district's emergency response protocols.
- B. "School day" includes the entirety of every instructional day under Education Law § 3604(7), encompassing all instructional and non-instructional time such as homeroom, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time.
- C. "School grounds" include any district structure, athletic field, playground, or real property within the school boundaries.

II. General Policy Statement:

Effective August 1, 2025, students shall be prohibited from using internet-enabled devices during the school day on school grounds unless such use falls under the approved exceptions described in Section IV of this policy. This policy does not apply before the start of the instructional day or after the conclusion of the instructional day, as defined in Education Law § 3604(7). The district is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged personal electronic devices brought to school.

III. Stakeholder Consultation:

This policy was developed in consultation with:

- A. Bargaining unit representatives,
- B. Parent/guardian representatives,
- C. Student representatives,
- D. School administrators and staff.

Documentation of these consultations is on file with the Office of Pupil Services.

IV. Authorized Exceptions

- A. Student use of internet-enabled devices during the school day is permitted under the following conditions:
- B. Educational Use
  - 1. When authorized by a teacher, administrator, or school for specific educational purposes.
  - 2. Healthcare Management
    - a) When necessary for managing a student's medical needs (e.g., glucose monitoring, seizure detection apps).
  - 3. Emergency Situations
    - a) In circumstances deemed emergencies by school authorities.
  - 4. Translation Services
    - a) When the device is used as a translation aid.
  - 5. Caregiving Responsibilities
  - 6. On a case-by-case basis, upon recommendation by a school psychologist, social worker, or counselor, for students who are primary caregivers for a family member.
- C. Parents may request an exception for their children to use internet-enabled devices during the school day as listed above. Requests must be made to the Building Principal, and for healthcare exceptions, must include documentation from an appropriate healthcare professional.

V. Legal Requirement

- A. When required by applicable law.

VI. Special Education and 504 Plans

- A. The policy shall not restrict a student's use of an internet-enabled device if such use is included in:
  - 1. The student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), or a Section 504 Plan under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794).

VII. Parental Contact and Communication

- A. During the school day, to minimize distractions, parents (which, for purposes of this policy, includes persons in parental relation) may contact their children by calling the main office of each building and be referred to a Clerk Typist the HS and/or MS to relay important messages for the students. The district will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

VIII. Storage of Devices

- A. As required by Education Law §2803, this policy prohibits student use of internet-enabled devices during the “school day” (including all classes, homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time) on school grounds (any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the boundary of a school or district or BOCES facility), unless under an exception (e.g., IEP/Section 504 or as permitted in section IV).
1. At the elementary school level, students are discouraged from bringing devices to school. Any device that is brought to school must be powered off and stored in a designated classroom location.
  2. Each classroom in the middle school and high school will be equipped with a wall-mounted, lockable 60-slot storage cabinet. These aluminum cabinets feature individual vertical compartments for smartphones and smartwatches, with two slots assigned per student.
    - a) The district will purchase “wired” earbuds for each MS/HS student. This will eliminate the need for a student to use their own wireless earbuds during school hours.
  3. Daily Procedures
    - a) Morning Arrival  
Students will be required to place their internet-enabled devices into their assigned slots during homeroom upon arrival each day. Devices must remain stored and powered off (or in silent mode) throughout the school day.
    - b) Early Dismissal  
Students who are dismissed early (e.g., illness, appointment) may retrieve their devices by returning to the homeroom with a hall pass or through assistance from a hall monitor or designee if the classroom is occupied.
    - c) Late Arrivals / CTE (BOCES) Students  
Students arriving after the start of homeroom or returning midday from off-site programs will check in with a dedicated Clerk Typist stationed in the main office. This clerk will oversee secure storage and retrieval of student devices outside of classroom time.
    - d) End-of-Day Retrieval  
Students will return to their homerooms at the end of the instructional day to retrieve their devices. CTE/BOCES students will retrieve their devices from the Clerk before leaving the building.
- B. Students are discouraged from bringing other personal electronic devices to school. If students do bring such devices to school, they must be silenced and stored and locked in the District provided storage box located in each classroom and attendance office, and not used during the school day unless permission is granted by the school.
- C. Administrators and staff may also restrict use of electronic devices during school events and activities held outside of the school day and/or off school grounds.

- IX. Publication and Translation
  - A. This policy shall be published on the district's publicly accessible website no later than August 1, 2025.
  - B. Upon request, the policy shall be translated into any of the twelve most commonly spoken non-English languages in New York State, as per U.S. Census data.
  
- X. Annual Reporting and Equity Review
  - A. By September 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the district will publish a report on its website including:
    - a. Enforcement data, including de-identified demographic statistics,
    - b. An analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement,
    - c. A mitigation plan if statistically significant disparities are found.
  - B. The annual report will be compiled by the department of Pupil Services and posted on the district's website under Departments and Services>>> Pupil/Personnel Services section.