

(X) Required

(x) Local

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STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students remain focused on their academic responsibilities throughout the school day, which includes all instructional and non-instructional periods, by prohibiting the use of personal internet-enabled devices and cell phones. 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 below).

Definitions

"Internet-enabled devices" includes 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.

"School day" includes all instructional and non-instructional time during a required school day (including but not limited to homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time).

"School grounds" includes any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a district elementary, middle, and high school.

General Restrictions

Students are prohibited from using personal internet-enabled devices during the school day anywhere on school grounds, unless explicitly authorized under "Exceptions For Use" of this policy.

Exceptions For Use

However, students may be authorized to use an Internet-enabled device during the school day on school grounds:

If authorized by a teacher, administrator, or District personnel for a specific educational purpose:

- Health care management
- In the event of an emergency
- For translation services
- For students who are routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member, when determined appropriate in advance by District personnel
- Where required by law, including a student's:
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Section 504 Plan

On-Site Storage of Internet-Enabled Devices Including Cell Phones

Students must silence and store their Internet-enabled devices in on-site storage areas (e.g. student lockers) that the District will designate during the school day. The designated on-site storage areas must be easily accessible to students and provide adequate security to ensure the safekeeping of the students' devices. The District will communicate the procedures for storing and retrieving devices, ensuring that students understand their responsibilities in using the on-site storage facilities provided. 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.

Electronic Devices and Testing

To ensure the integrity of testing, in accordance with state guidelines, students may not bring cell phones or other electronic devices into classrooms or other exam locations during state assessments. Teachers may grant specific permission for electronic device usage during tests other than state assessments.

Test proctors, monitors and school officials have the right to collect cell phones and other prohibited electronic devices prior to the start of the test and to hold them for the duration of the test taking time. Admission to the test will be prohibited to any student who has a cell phone or other electronic device in their possession and does not relinquish it.

Students with Individualized Education Plans, Section 504 Plans, or documentation from medical practitioners specifically requiring use of electronic devices may do so as specified.

Methods for Parents to Contact Students During the School Day

To accommodate necessary communication, parents or persons in parental relation may contact the district in order to communicate with their student(s). Parents and persons in parental relation will be notified in writing of the methods that are available for contacting their student during school hours at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

Student Discipline for Accessing Internet-Enabled Devices During the School Day

The District is prohibited from suspending a student solely for accessing internet-enabled devices in violation of this policy. For students out of compliance with this policy, it is possible that the device will be held in the school office until the end of the school day and/or parents may be required to retrieve the device from school. Specific consequences will be identified in building codes of conduct. The district will exercise reasonable care to maintain the security of devices that are held by the district, but cannot guarantee the devices will be secure. For students with exceptions under this policy, the district will examine alternative ways to achieve the purpose of the exception, including different storage or access provisions.

Posting and Translation of Policy

The District will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website. The district will also include this information, or a plain language summary, in student/family handbooks.

Cross-ref: 4526, Computer Use in Instruction
4526.1, Internet Safety
5300, Code of Conduct

Policy 5695

Ref: Education Law §2803
Price v. New York City Board of Education, 51 A.D.3d 277, lv. to appeal denied, 11 N.Y.3d 702 (2008) (District may ban possession of cell phones on school property)
NYSED, *Prohibition of Cell Phones and Electronic Devices in New York State Assessments*, www.nysed.gov/educator-integrity/prohibition-cell-phones-and-electronic-devices-new-york-state-assessments

Adoption date: July 8, 2025