



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### New NYS Law Banning Cell Phones During the School Day (Effective 2025-26)

#### 1. What is the new law and how does it impact students?

Starting in the 2025–26 school year, New York State law requires all public schools to prohibit student use of **internet-enabled devices** (such as smartphones, smartwatches, and tablets) **during the entire school day—bell to bell**. This includes homeroom, classes, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time.

#### 2. Why is this law being implemented?

The state and our district support this law to:

- Reduce distractions during the school day.
- Improve student focus, mental health, and academic engagement.
- Ensure student safety during emergencies by limiting misinformation and congestion on emergency communication systems.

#### 3. Can students bring cell phones or devices to school?

Yes, but they **cannot use them** during the school day. They must be powered off and properly stored:

- **Elementary School:** In student backpacks.
- **Middle & High School:** In student lockers.

Students are discouraged from bringing personal devices unless necessary.

#### 4. How can I contact my child during the school day?

If you need to reach your child during school hours, please **call the school's main office**. Staff will deliver urgent messages as appropriate. This ensures minimal disruption to instruction and student focus.

## 5. Are there any exceptions to this policy for student use of devices?

Yes. Internet-enabled devices may be used during the school day **only** under specific, approved circumstances, including:

- A medical need (e.g., diabetes, asthma), with documentation from a healthcare provider.
- Support for translation or language services.
- A documented responsibility to care for a family member.
- As required by a student's **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** or **Section 504 Plan**.
- In the event of an emergency, as directed by school staff.

Parents seeking an exception must submit a request to the building principal in writing. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## 6. What happens if a student uses a device during the school day?

Violations will be handled as follows:

- **First offense:** Device will be held in the main office until the end of the school day. The student may retrieve it, and parents will be notified.
- **Subsequent offenses:** A parent/guardian must come to school to retrieve the device.

## 7. Will the school be responsible if a device is lost or stolen?

No. Students who bring devices to school do so at their own risk. The district is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.

## 8. What about school events or after-school activities?

Our current practices and policies for after-school use of devices remain in place: devices may be used as appropriate in these settings, as determined by the adult in charge. To ensure student athletes receive communication from coaches in a timely manner, coaches will communicate with students via Parent Square, which can be accessed on district Chromebooks during the school day.

## 9. What happens during testing and state assessments?

Our current practices and policies for device use during testing remain in place: State law prohibits electronic devices in testing environments. Students may not bring phones or smartwatches into classrooms during exams. Devices will be collected by staff before testing begins.

## **10. Where can I find this policy and related resources?**

The full policy is available on the district website ([Policy 5695: Students and Personal Electronic Devices](#)).

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### **Have more questions?**

Please contact your child's building principal or school office for more information.

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