



Erie 1 BOCES Distraction-Free School Zone Guidance

1. General Overview

Student use of personal cell phones, internet-enabled devices and associated devices such as headphones/headsets (ex. Bluetooth enabled headphones) are prohibited during the entire school day, including all instructional and non-instructional times (e.g., homeroom, lunch, recess, study halls, passing time). This may include but is not limited to: smartphones, flip phones, TracFone's, tablets, smartwatches, gaming consoles, music devices or other devices capable of connecting to the Internet and enabling the user to access content on the Internet, including social media applications.

2. Device Storage

- Except as otherwise noted, student devices must be turned off at the start of the school day and stored in the student's locker or other individual storage unit as assigned by Erie 1 BOCES.
- Each school within Erie 1 BOCES will communicate the procedures for storing and retrieving devices, ensuring that students understand their responsibilities in using the on-site storage provided.
- **Notes:**
 - a) **Children's Psychiatric Center Students:** Devices are to be turned off at the start of the school day. Devices will be collected by and stored in the Main Office.
 - b) **Satellite Program Locations:** Students participating in an Erie 1 BOCES satellite program (i.e., a single Erie 1 BOCES classroom housed within a component school district), are to follow the Distraction-Free policy of the host district.
 - c) **Students participating in internships, New Visions, Tech Prep programs, special program events or seminars** will be permitted to access their device as deemed necessary and appropriate by school staff.

3. Exceptions

Students may use their personal devices under the following circumstances:

- Authorized by building administration for a specific educational purpose or in the event of an emergency.
- Healthcare needs as required for tracking health conditions or medical purposes as per an Individual Health Care Plan (ex: Diabetes monitoring).
- Translation Services as necessary for English Language Learners.

- On a case-by-case basis for student caregivers responsible for the well-being of a family member. Such allowances will only be permitted by a school administrator in consultation with a school social worker, school counselor or school psychologist.
- Required by law if the use of the device is mandated by law.
- IEP/504 Plans - When specified in a student's Individualized Education Plan, a structured process will be developed.

4. Contacting Your Child During the School Day

- Parents or guardians may call the school's main office to leave a message for their child. An emergency phone line has been established within each school for the express purpose of enabling immediate communication.
- In addition, students may use the school's phone in the office (or classroom, when available and appropriate) to contact their parent or guardian as deemed necessary by school staff.

5. Enforcement and Consequences

- **First Offense**
 - a) Verbal warning.
- **Second Offense**
 - a) Device confiscated.
 - b) Returned to student at the end of the school day.
- **Third Offense**
 - a) Device confiscated.
 - b) Parent or guardian notification.
 - c) Returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- **Fourth Offense and Beyond**
 - a) Device confiscated.
 - b) Return of the device to be coordinated with parent or guardian.
 - c) Additional school consequences may apply for insubordination (refusing to comply when asked by school staff).

6. Training and Communication

- Students will receive training through classroom lessons and/or assemblies.
- Families and staff will be communicated with through back to school mailings, via Erie 1 BOCES' website and through the Code of Conduct/Student Handbook.

7. Liability

Erie 1 BOCES will not be liable for the loss, damage, misuse, or theft of any personal technology brought to school. Erie 1 BOCES reserves the right to monitor, inspect, and/or confiscate personal technology when administration has reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of school policy or criminal law has occurred.