

## **STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The Board of Education recognizes that students may have personal electronic devices that can perform different functions. Such devices include “internet-enabled devices” defined as: 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 accessing 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.

In addition, the Board of Education encourages faculty and staff to minimize the use of personal devices during the school day.

Generally, the district is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged personal electronic devices brought to school.

### **Communication with Parents/Persons in Parental Relation**

During the school day, to minimize distractions, parents, guardians, and authorized emergency contacts may contact their children via the following methods: calling the school office or the school-provided email address. Students may contact their parents by asking to use a phone in the main office, nurse’s office, or counselor’s/service provider’s office. The district will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

### **Device Access and Storage**

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).

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**STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (cont'd)**

At the elementary school level, students are discouraged from bringing devices to school. Any device that is brought to school must be turned off before students disembark from the bus and kept in their backpacks.

1. At the middle school level, student devices must be silenced and stored in student lockers.
2. At the high school level, student devices must be silenced and stored out of sight in bookbags or in student lockers.

Students are discouraged from bringing other personal electronic devices to school. If students do bring such devices to school, they must be stored for the entire school day out of sight in backpacks or in lockers, and they must be silenced and not used during the school day unless permission is granted by the school.

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.

**Exceptions for Specific Purposes**

Use of internet-enabled devices must be permitted where included in a student's Individualized Education Program, Section 504 plan, or where required by law. Additionally, the district permits the use of internet-enabled devices in the event of an emergency, and under the following circumstances:

1. Where necessary to manage a student's healthcare (e.g., diabetes, asthma, medication, etc.);
2. For translation services; and/or
3. For students who are routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member (on a case-by-case basis, upon review and recommendation by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor and approved by the school administrator).

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.

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## STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (cont'd)

### Enforcement, Consequences, and Reporting

Enforcement of this policy is chiefly the responsibility of building administrative staff; however, all designated employees are expected to assist in enforcement. Students will be reminded of this policy regularly and consistently, especially at the start of the school year and after returning from breaks.

For students out of compliance with this policy, the following shall occur:  
In the event that a student is observed using an unauthorized electronic device, or is seen to have an unauthorized device on their person, the following shall occur:

**First Offense:** The device will be confiscated by a staff member, and the student will be referred to the administration. Noncompliance will be viewed as insubordination and treated accordingly. The device will be turned over to a building administrator. Students will be provided with the consequence of having to bring their device to the principal's office each day, for a period of five consecutive school days, so that it can remain out of their possession during the instructional day.

**Second Offense:** The device will be confiscated by a staff member and returned only to the student's parent/guardian by an administrator following communication with a parent/guardian. Additional consequences for students, such as detention and in-school suspension, will also be considered.

Subsequent violations of this policy shall result in additional behavioral consequences, including the possibility of in-school suspension. 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.

Administrators will also discuss the aims of this policy with students and their parents, the benefits of a distraction-free environment, the reasons the student had difficulty following this policy, and how the district can help the student contribute to a distraction-free environment.

The district may not impose suspension from school if the sole grounds for the suspension is that the student accessed an internet-enabled device as prohibited by this policy. However, the district may utilize consequences under the district's Code of Conduct, including detention, in-school suspension, and exclusion from extracurricular activities. The district may also utilize assignments on the detrimental impact of social media on mental health, smartphones in school, or other relevant topics.

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## STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (cont'd)

Some uses of personal electronic devices may constitute a violation of the school district's Code of Conduct or other district policies, and in some instances, the law. The district will cooperate with law enforcement officials as appropriate.

Beginning September 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the district will publish an annual report on its website detailing the enforcement of this policy over the past year.

### 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 classroom/district testing and 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 the use of electronic devices may do so as specified.

### Policy Distribution and Translation

As required by law, the district will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website. Upon request by a student or parent, the district will translate this policy into any of the twelve most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in the state, as identified by the most recent American Community Survey published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The district will also include this information, or a plain language summary, in student/family handbooks.

Cross-ref: 7314, Student Acceptable Use of District Technology  
8271, Children's Internet Protection Act: Internet Content Filtering/Safety  
3410, Code of Conduct on School Property

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](http://www.nysed.gov/educator-integrity/prohibition-cell-phones-and-electronic-devices-new-york-state-assessments)

Adoption date: