

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We hope this letter finds you and your family well. We are writing to inform you of an important update to the South Country Central School District's [Policy 5695 - Students and Personal Electronic Devices](#), which was revised and adopted by the Board of Education on July 1, 2025 pursuant to NYS Education Law.

This revised policy reflects our commitment to fostering a safe, focused, and supportive learning environment for all students. With the rise in digital distractions and concerns regarding student well-being, the updated policy outlines clear guidelines regarding the use of cell phones and other internet-enabled personal devices during the school day.

### **Key Highlights of the Updated Policy:**

- No student use of internet-enabled devices (e.g., cell phones, smartwatches, tablets) is permitted during the school day on school grounds including in class, during lunch, recess, and hallway transitions, unless a documented exception applies.
- Elementary school students (K-5) are not permitted to bring devices to school.
- Middle and High School students are strongly encouraged to leave all internet-enabled devices at home. If a student in grades 6-12 needs to bring internet-enabled devices to school, those devices must be stored in the student's school-issued locker for the duration of the school day.
- Exceptions, with administrative approval and appropriate documentation, may be granted for students with medical needs, students with family care responsibilities, and students in grades four and five who walk home unsupervised.
- In case of emergency, communication between parents and students must go through the school's main office.
- Devices used without approval will be held in the main office until the end of the day, with escalating consequences for repeated violations.

### **Why This Matters:**

This policy supports our mission of maintaining a school environment where all students can learn free of unnecessary distractions, misinformation, and stress. We want to ensure every child has the opportunity to be fully "present" and engaged throughout the school day.

The full policy will be made available on the District's website, and a summary will be included in our student and family handbooks. If you need this policy translated into another language, please don't hesitate to contact your child's school office.

**Mr. Santana, Superintendent of Schools, will be hosting a community meeting on Monday, August 25th at 6:00 p.m. to provide information regarding the new policy and to answer any questions or concerns. The meeting will be held at Bellport High School's Library.**

We appreciate your partnership in reinforcing these expectations at home and helping us promote positive, focused learning environments for all.

If you have any questions or believe your child may qualify for an exception under the new policy, please contact the principal of your child's school building.

E. Anne Hayes, President  
Board of Education

Antonio Santana, Superintendent of Schools  
South Country Central School District