STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES
Replaces Policy 4525: Cell Phone Use

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/or accessing content on the internet, including but not limited to 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.

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 (which, for purposes of this policy, includes persons in parental relation) may contact their children by calling the school office(s). Students may contact their parents by these same methods. 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).

1. At the elementary school level, students are prohibited from bringing devices to school.
2. At the middle school level, students are discouraged from bringing devices to school. If brought to school, student devices must be silenced and stored in a district provided locking pouch, a district provided laptop case, or school locker. District provided laptop cases and/or school lockers will be acceptable until full locking pouch implementation is achieved. Locking pouch implementation will be scaffolded per available resources and installation capacity.
3. At the high school level, students are discouraged from bringing devices to school. If brought to school, student devices must be silenced and stored in a district provided locking pouch, a district provided laptop case, school locker, or backpack. District provided laptop cases, school lockers and/or backpacks will be acceptable until full locking pouch implementation is achieved. Locking pouch implementation will be scaffolded per available resources and installation capacity.

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NOTE: If students damage a district provided locking pouch, the parent will be responsible for the cost of repair and/or replacement.

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 in a district provided laptop case, backpacks, or lockers, as appropriate, and they must be silenced and not used during the school day unless permission is granted by a school administrator.

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 under the following circumstances:

1. Where necessary to manage a student's healthcare (e.g., diabetes, asthma, medication, etc.);

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.

Enforcement, Consequences and Reporting
Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of building administrators, teachers, and all building staff. 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 administrative staff will proceed as follows: the device will be held in the school office until the end of the school day. The first time this happens, the student may retrieve the device, and the parent will be notified. For subsequent instances, the parent must retrieve the device. Further instances will result in the device being held in the school office daily for longer periods of time. 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.

Some uses of personal electronic devices may constitute a violation of the school district 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, including non-identifiable demographic information of students who have faced disciplinary action for non-compliance with this policy, and an analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement of this policy. If a statistically significant disparate enforcement impact is identified, the report will include a plan to mitigate such disparate enforcement.

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 all/any testing.

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.

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.

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

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

Approved by the Board of Education: 08/21/25