

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

I. PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to support the school district's focus on learning in alignment with the district's mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools. Possession and use of personal electronic communication devices must be regulated to ensure that such devices do not disrupt or interfere with the education process or school operations, impair the safety, welfare, and privacy of students and staff, or are used as part of an act of academic dishonesty.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

To minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment and to support school environments in which students can engage fully with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the school board has determined the use of personal electronic communication devices by students during school hours should be limited.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bell-to-Bell" means from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day to begin instructional time until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day. "Bell-to-bell" includes lunch and time in between class periods.
- B. "Cell Phone" means a personal device capable of making calls, transmitting pictures or video, or sending or receiving messages through electronic means. The definition of cell phone includes a non-smart phone that is limited to making phone calls or text messages and a smart phone that encompasses the above features.
- C. "Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.
- D. "Instructional Time" means any structured or unstructured learning experiences that occur from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day.
- E. "Personal Electronic Communication Device" means any personal device capable of connecting to a cell phone, the internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly connects to another similar device. Personal electronic communication devices may include cell phones, wearable devices such as smart watches, personal headphones, earbuds or pods, laptops, tablets, virtual reality devices, and other personal electronic communication devices with the abovementioned characteristics.
- F. "Stored" means a cell phone or personal electronic communication device not being carried on the student's person, including not in the student's pocket. Storage options may include, but are not limited to, in the student's backpack, in the student's locker, in a locked pouch, or in a designated place in the classroom, as determined by school administration.

IV. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE USE AND STORAGE

- A. Personal Electronic Communication Device Use
 - 1) Students are prohibited from using personal electronic communication devices during the school day, unless specified in the Student Handbook
 - 2) Elementary Schools (K-5)

Personal electronic communication devices will be stored in lockers during the school day. Unless given permission by a teacher, students should not have phones/smart devices out during class. The use of camera features is NOT allowed in school locker rooms or bathrooms at any time. Recording, posting or transmitting photos or video of a person without their permission is NOT allowed. Use of external speakers is not allowed; please use earbuds (if your school permits or silence device). Improper use of phones/smart devices may result in confiscation of the device or an inability to bring it to school in the future. The district is not responsible for loss, damage or theft.

3) Middle School

Students cannot use personal technology devices such as tablets, computers, and cell phones at school. Teachers also have students use Internet-based technologies owned by the district. All district technologies are intended to be used for educational purposes only. This includes activity while on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, and in school-supplied vehicles. Additionally, unacceptable use of technologies while off school grounds may be subject to disciplinary action if the activity disrupts the educational environment, or negatively affects another student or school staff member. Students cannot change their school email account name or profile picture.

4) High School

Students may NOT use cell phones or smart devices during class time. It is strongly suggested that all electronic devices be kept off and in a locker during school hours. Cell phones and smart devices may be accessed during passing time or lunch if necessary. The use of cell phones, smart devices or cameras is NOT allowed in school locker rooms or bathrooms at any time. Recording, posting or transmitting photos or video of a person without their permission is NOT allowed. Use of external speakers is not allowed. Improper use of cell phones/smart devices may result in confiscation of the device or an inability to bring it to school in the future.

B. If the school district has a reasonable suspicion that a student has violated a school policy, rule, or law by use of a cell phone or other electronic communication device, the school district may request to search the device. The search of the device will be reasonably related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search.

C. Off-Campus School-Sponsored Activities

School administration may establish guidelines for personal electronic communication device possession and use during off-campus school-sponsored activities, such as extracurricular activities, outdoor and service trips, and school field trips. These guidelines will be provided at pre-activity meetings, activity-specific permission slips, and by other means as appropriate in the circumstances.

V. LIMITATIONS ON USE OF AND STORAGE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

A. Limitations on Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

- 1) Personal electronic communication devices may not be used in any manner that causes or results in disruption of the educational environment or school-sponsored extracurricular activities or events or impairs or interferes with school district operations.
- 2) Devices, including but not limited to personal electronic communication devices, with audio, video, or photo-taking capabilities shall not be used at any time in locker rooms, bathrooms, or other locations where the presence of such devices poses an unreasonable risk to the safety, welfare, or privacy of others. Confiscation and search of such devices will occur if found in these areas.
- 3) Students may not use a device to record, transmit, or post audio, videos, or photos of a person or persons on school grounds or on a school bus without the express permission

of school staff in addition to the express consent of the individual or individuals that are the subjects of the recording.

- 4) Personal electronic communication devices may not be used to engage in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or other activity prohibited under federal or state law or under school district policy.
- 5) Personal electronic communication devices shall not be used during a lockdown drill, a fire drill, or a similar safety drill.

B. Storage of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

Students shall keep their personal electronic communication devices in a secure place, such as the student's locker, a closed backpack, a storage device provided by the school, or an area designated by the classroom teacher at all times when personal electronic communication device use is prohibited.

VI. EXCEPTIONS

- A. Nothing in this policy prohibits a student from using a personal electronic communication device for a purpose documented in the student's individualized education program, a plan developed under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or a health care plan in force regarding the student.
- B. A student may use a personal electronic communication device to monitor or address a health concern or medical condition upon permission granted by school administration.
- C. Students may use a personal electronic communication device when the use is necessary to respond to or report an emergency. For purposes of this policy, "emergency" means an actual or imminent threat to the health or safety of students and/or school personnel, which may result in death, bodily injury, or substantial property damage.
- D. A student may use a personal electronic communication device during a time at which use would otherwise be prohibited when the student has been granted permission from a staff member to use the device. If the school district implements a curriculum that uses technology, students may be allowed to use their own personal electronic communication devices to access the curriculum. Students who are allowed to use their own devices to access the curriculum will be granted access to any application or electronic materials when they are available to students who do not use their own devices, or provided free of charge to students who do not use their own devices for curriculum.
- E. Students who need to make a call may request permission to use a telephone in the building.

VII. DISCIPLINE

If a student violates this policy, a teacher or administrator shall take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures:

- A. Give the student a verbal warning and require the student to store the student's personal electronic communication device in accordance with this policy.
- B. Securely store the student's personal electronic communication device in a teacher- or administrator-controlled locker, bin, or drawer for the duration of the class or period.
- C. Place the student's personal electronic communication device in the school's central office for the remainder of the school day.
- D. Place the student's personal device in the school's central office to be picked up by the student's parent or guardian.
- E. Schedule a conference with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the student's personal device use
- F. Apply discipline as provided under school district policies and as appropriate.

VIII. SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The school district is not responsible for, nor is it required to investigate, any lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic communication devices brought onto school grounds or the bus or school-sponsored activities or events.
- B. The school board directs the superintendent and school district administration to establish additional rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of personal electronic communication devices in schools as the superintendent and school district administration find appropriate. These rules shall be consistent with this policy and other applicable school district policies. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels, or pursuant to similar criteria.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 13.32 (Educational Data)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.73 (School Cell Phone Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.166 (Limit on Screen Time for Children in Preschool and Kindergarten)
Minn. Stat. § 125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)
Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)
29 U.S.C. § 794 (Nondiscrimination under Federal Grants and Programs)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)
Away for the Day (www.awayfortheday.org)
MASSP/MESPA, *The Cell Phone Toolkit* (July 2024)