

Personal Electronic Device Policy Update

November 3, 2025



Policy Document

- JICJ - STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS
- “The use of Personal Electronic Devices for grades PreK-8 in all school buildings during the School Day is strictly prohibited. Families and caregivers should not send Personal Electronic Devices to school with students with the expectation that they will have access to them at any point during the School Day.” (etc.)
- Reducing student distraction and promoting healthy online habits
- School Committee Policy supports and strengthens the previously existing practices in our classrooms

Communication with Families

- “As we begin a new school year, please remember that we do not allow students to use personal electronic devices (phones, watches, etc.) during the school day. We are committed to reducing student distraction and promoting healthy online habits as outlined in the Student Use of Technology Policy that the school committee adopted in January 2025. Please take a moment to watch the video below for a summary of the policy!”
- Video by Dave Kartunen, narrated by Sudbury’s own Ivar Hennsington - <https://vimeo.com/1032874421>

Broader Context

- Aligning our procedures around school devices with the same goal of reducing distractions and excessive screen time
- Lights Out hours on student Chromebooks between 11 and 5
- Youtube blocked in grades K-8 so that students can only access content through teacher-managed SafeShare; grade 8 to receive YouTube access after specific instruction around responsible research
- Continued requirement that all online subscription vendors sign a student data privacy agreement
- “The Personal Device Policy adopted by the school committee concerning student phones, watches, etc. is aimed at reducing issues caused by student distraction and excessive screen time. We are trying to support this same goal with our own practices surrounding student Chromebooks. Chromebooks may not be used during indoor recess or given as whole-class or individual reward time. They are tools, not toys, and we want to ensure that screen time is purposeful and meets these guidelines. We recognize this may be a shift for some classrooms this year, so we want everyone to be aware.”

Is the policy effective?

Yes. You can walk into the cafeteria, the hallway, any classroom, and you will not find students looking at their phones.

- Principal Jeff Mela

Conduct Procedures

- First Offense, warning
- Second Office, loss of phone and administrator call home
- Student reports, monitoring

Survey Question 1

To what extent has the new personal device policy (preventing student cell phone use during the school day) impacted student focus and engagement in your classroom?

58%	Improved
42%	Slightly Improved
0%	Slightly worsened
0%	Worsened

Survey Question 2

Since the implementation of the new personal device policy, how has the frequency of cell phone-related classroom disruptions (ex: ringing/alerts, unauthorized use, texting home) changed?

- 50% No change (we did not allow access before)
- 50% Reduced Usage
- 0% Increased Usage

Ideas from Staff

- Consistent messaging and practice is key to promoting good habits.
- Reminding students in homeroom, and taking a moment to have all students take out their phones, verify that they are off, and put them away for the day.
- Including “no phone” reminders as part of morning hallway greetings, no running, please walk, etc. messaging.
- Establishing norms around having phones put away all day is not that different from other behaviors.

Bigger picture

[Legislation](#) has passed the Massachusetts Senate to remove phones from the classrooms. The bill is awaiting consideration in the Massachusetts House.