

Policies

Westerly Public Schools Electronic Communication Devices Policy

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Whereas electronic communication devices (ECDs) create classroom disruptions and can lead to inappropriate behavior including bullying and harassment in our schools, this policy is created to minimize the use of such devices thereby limiting distractions and inappropriate activity.

A student may possess an electronic communication device (including but not limited to cellular phones) in school provided that during school hours the device remains put away in a pocket, backpack or other storage space during all instructional time. The only exception to this policy is when a teacher asks students to use ECDs for instructional purposes.

In addition, students are barred from using earbuds or similar audio devices during instructional time unless authorized to do so for instructional purposes by a teacher.

Students may not use an electronic communication device (ECD) on school property or at a school sponsored activity to access and/or view internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school or take part in any activity prohibited by the District's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) WPS Policy 2300.

Violations of this policy may result in confiscation of the cellular telephone, ECD or audio device and disciplinary action.

If the cellular telephone or ECD is confiscated, it will, as a rule, be released/returned to the student or parent/guardian after the student complies with any disciplinary consequence imposed. The building principal may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g., child pornography, cyber bullying).

The student who possesses a cellular telephone or ECD is responsible for its care. Westerly Public Schools are not responsible for preventing theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to it.

Parents/guardians are to contact the school office to communicate with their child during the school day.

Students may use designated school phones to contact parents/guardians during the school day.

1. If a student is discovered to be using an ECD in violation of District policy, the student will be asked to turn it off and hand it to the staff member (if the student does not comply, s/he will be immediately subject to disciplinary action*).
2. The staff member will not turn on or view the contents of the phone or ECD.

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3. Any confiscated ECD or audio device will be forwarded to the school office where it will be held until returned.
4. The Principal or designee will determine if there is any suspicion that the ECD has been used in a way that possibly violates state or federal laws and may at his/her discretion turn the device over to local or state authorities for further investigation.
5. A parent or legal guardian of the student may be required to come to the school after the student complies with any disciplinary consequence imposed in order to meet with the administration and retrieve the equipment.

*Disciplinary action may include detention, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

Adopted: May 19, 2010
Updated: October 4, 2023