



KINGSWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committed to Excellence

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KRSD: Important Back-to-School Updates Regarding Personal Internet-Enabled Devices and Student Attendance

Dear Kingsway Families, Students and Staff,

As we prepare to welcome students back for the 2026-2027 school year, our goal remains the same: to create learning environments where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. To support that commitment, I would like to share two important updates that will take effect this fall. The first concerns the use of students' *personal internet-enabled devices* during the school day, and the second serves as a reminder regarding our revised *student attendance procedures*.

Personal Internet-Enabled Devices During the School Day

Technology is an essential part of teaching and learning in today's schools. At Kingsway, students use district-issued technology every day to collaborate, research, create, and develop skills for success beyond graduation. At the same time, personal technology can become a significant distraction when it competes for students' attention during the school day.

Beginning this school year, all New Jersey public schools are required to implement a new policy governing students' use of **personal internet-enabled devices** during the school day. Although commonly referred to as the "cell phone law," the legislation applies to all personal internet-enabled devices, including smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, personal laptops, and similar devices. It also establishes a *bell-to-bell* expectation, meaning these devices may not be used during the school day. **District-issued instructional devices are not affected.**

What Our Students Told Us

Perhaps most importantly, our students have shared many of these same perspectives. In a recent district survey, approximately 70% of Kingsway students reported spending three or more hours each day engaged in recreational screen time outside of school. They also shared that technology is most valuable when used intentionally to support learning and identified stress management, mental health, and peer relationships as areas where they would welcome additional support. Their feedback aligns with a [growing body of research](#) demonstrating that reducing access to personal internet-enabled devices during the school day improves students' ability to focus, strengthens face-to-face interactions, and supports their overall emotional well-being. We believe this change will help create classrooms where students are more engaged in learning and more connected to one another.

Our expectation is straightforward: Whenever possible, **students are encouraged to leave their personal**



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OFF AND AWAY

Device Expectations 2026-27

From entering the building until final dismissal, personal internet-enabled devices must remain **off and away** all day.

	OFF	Powered Off or Silenced
	AWAY	Stored in School-Issued Lockers or Leave at Home
	ALL DAY	From building entry until final dismissal including class, lunch, passing time, study hall, and bathrooms

 This policy applies to cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, personal laptops, smart glasses, and other personal devices capable of connecting to the internet or sending or receiving digital communications and is in accordance with NJ state law.

Need to communicate during the school day?

 Parents: Contact the school's main office.	 Students: Use the school's phone in the office with staff's permission.	 Students may use their district-issued devices and email accounts to communicate with their parent or guardian.
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 **Leave at home** or stored in school-issued lockers.

LEARN NOW. CONNECT LATER.

Home of the Dragons

internet-enabled devices at home. If a student chooses to bring one to school, the device must remain powered off and secured in the student's district-issued locker throughout the school day. High school students participating in an approved alternative schedule will secure their devices in a lockbox located in the High School Main Office.

To reinforce this expectation, we have adopted the simple message, "*Off and Away.*" Students and families will see this reminder throughout the school year as we encourage students to *Learn Now. Connect Later.*

Student Expectations and Code of Conduct

We expect every student to understand and follow these expectations beginning on the first day of school. As with any Board-approved policy, **students who repeatedly fail to comply will be subject to progressive disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.**

School	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
Middle School	2 Administrative Lunch Detentions	2 After School Detentions	1 In-School Suspension
High School	2 After School Detentions	1 In-School Suspension	1 Out-of-School Suspension

Please note:

- **Following a first offense**, the device will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- **Following a second or third offense**, a parent or guardian will be required to retrieve the device from school between **2:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.**
- **Students who refuse to comply with staff directions** regarding this policy may be subject to additional disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
- High school students assigned an Out-of-School Suspension will also lose **Good Student Standing**, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- **Following a third offense**, school administrators will work collaboratively with the student and family to develop an individualized plan designed to prevent future violations.

Our expectation is that very few students will ever reach these disciplinary consequences. With the support of our students, families, and staff, I am confident that this transition will be successful and that, together, we will create a more focused learning environment where every student can thrive.

Communicating With Your Child During the School Day

We recognize that this change will require an adjustment for many families. If you need to reach your child during the school day, please contact your school's main office. Likewise, students who need to contact a parent or guardian may do so through the main office or by using their district-issued device and school email account. These procedures ensure important messages are communicated promptly while allowing classrooms to remain focused on teaching and learning.

Student Attendance Reminder

Finally, I would like to remind families that our revised attendance procedures, first communicated in my [June 9,](#)



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[2026 letter](#), will also take effect this school year. If you have not yet had an opportunity to review that communication, I encourage you to do so, as it contains important information regarding attendance expectations and procedures.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we begin another exciting school year. Together, we will create learning environments where students are more focused, more engaged with one another, and better positioned for success. I look forward to welcoming our students back to Kingsway.

Very truly yours,



James J. Lavender, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Resources: [2026 Guidance for Schools on Student Use of Internet-Enabled Devices](#)
[Growing Up Online: Findings and Recommendations from NJ Commission on the Effects of Social Media Usage on Adolescents](#)
[Superintendent's June 9, 2026 Revised Student Attendance Procedures](#)
[P.L. 2025, Chapter 195: An Act concerning student use of internet-enabled devices. Adopted 8 Jan 2026](#)



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