

KTUFSD Bell-to-Bell Restrictions on Smartphones and Internet Enabled Devices (K-12)

1. Why is KenTon implementing a Distraction Free School Zone?

In May 2025, New York State adopted education Law 2803(2) to restrict student use of internet-enabled devices.

Ed law 2803(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section 2854 of this chapter, each school district, charter school, and board of cooperative educational services shall adopt a written policy prohibiting the use of internet-enabled devices by students during the school day anywhere on school grounds. Each school district, charter school, and board of cooperative educational services shall consult local stakeholders, including but not limited to the employee organization representing each bargaining unit within the school building, Parent/Guardian and students, in the development of such policy prior to its adoption.

Student use of personal internet-enabled devices is prohibited for the entirety of the school day, this law will take effect during the 2025-2026 school year.

Schools cannot suspend a student solely for using an internet-enabled device in violation of the policy.

2. What is the Definition of Distraction Free School Internet-enabled devices?

Personal internet-enabled devices: Internet-enabled devices and the associated headphones/ headsets (bluetooth enabled accessories). Personal internet devices includes but is not limited to: smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, laptops, gaming-consoles, Fitbits, Google glasses, VR headsets, MP3 players, iPods, and iPads.

Does NOT include:

- Basic devices that can't connect to the internet
- Devices provided by the school for learning

Please see the exemption section for situations that are considered exempt.

3. What are the time and locations of the Distraction Free School requirement?

School Day: The entire school day, including all instructional time, plus homeroom, lunch, recess, study hall, and time between classes.

School Grounds: Anywhere on school property — this includes buildings, playgrounds, athletic fields, and all land within the school's property lines.

From the time students enter the building at the start of the day until they exit the building.

4. Where will students' internet-enabled devices be stored during the day?

From the time students enter the building at the start of the day until they exit the building at the end of the day:

- **Elementary Level:** Devices must be stored in classroom cell phone lockers, turned off, from the time they enter the building at the start of the school day until they exit the building at the end of the school day.
- **Middle School Level:** Devices must be turned off and stored in a locked locker from the time they enter the building at the start of the school day until they exit the building at the end of the school day.
- **High School Level:** Devices must be turned off and stored in a locked locker from the time they **enter** the building at the start of the school day until they **exit** the building at the end of the school day. Devices may not be used anytime during the school day, including but not limited to passing time, lunches, study halls, any non-instructional time. Updated Aug. 2026

Families should strongly consider having their students leave their devices at home as much as possible.

5. How will students and families access communication during the day?
● In the event of an emergency: Parent/Guardian may call the main office to leave a message for their child. ● Grades 5-12 Parent/Guardian should use CANVAS to contact their own child DIRECTIONS HERE. Note: All communication via Canvas is monitored by the district. ● In addition, in emergency situations, students should use the school's phone in the office with permission (or classroom, when available and appropriate) to call their Parent/Guardian, ● Reminder: Students will have access to their phone at the end of the day to get messages.
6. What are the exemptions to the Policy?
Students may use their personal, internet-enabled devices under the following circumstances, only if their district issued device does not provide the required service: ● Authorized by a Teacher - For a specific educational purpose (including personally owned laptops) ● Healthcare Needs - As required for tracking health conditions or medical purposes as per Individual Health Care Plan (example: Diabetes monitoring) ● In individual emergency situations, when the parent has notified school leadership of the specific nature of the emergency. ● Translation Services - As necessary for English Language Learners ● On a case-by-case basis for student caregivers responsible for the well-being of a family member. Such allowance will only be permitted after a review and determination by a school social worker, school counselor or school psychologist ● Required by Law - If the use of the device is mandated by law ● IEP/504 Plans - When specified in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan (Limited in scope. A structured process will be developed.)
7. What are the consequences for refusing to follow the Distraction Free Zone Policy?
1. First Offense - Device handed in. Parent/Guardian notification. Offense documented. Returned to the student at the end of the school day. 2. Second Offense - Device handed in. Parent/Guardian notification. Offense documented. Returned to Parent/Guardian at the end of the school day. 3. Third Offense and beyond - Device handed in. Parent/Guardian must pick up the phone. Offense documented. Additional school consequences implemented by administration. **A student continues refusal to comply: May result in administrative follow up and a student being required to place personal, internet-enabled electronic device(s) in a designated secure storage space prior to the first bell of the scheduled school day. Following the last bell of the day, the storage solution will be unlocked.
8. What is the training and communication plan?
Student Communication: Students will receive training on the policy through classroom lessons and/or assemblies. Family Communication: The policy will be communicated to families via the Family Handbook, school. newsletters, school website, District website, District app, District calendar. ● Parent/Guardian will be notified prior to the start of the school year about the policy and their role in supporting the distraction-free environment. ● School district Frequently Asked Questions will be posted on school district website Educator Training: Educators will receive training during in-service days at the beginning of the school year regarding the policy, how to enforce it, and how to communicate with Parent/Guardian/Guardian/Guardians.
9. Who developed this plan?
● April 2025: High school student reps attend Erie County Town Hall on Distraction Free School Zones ● May: Principals gathered input from their student principal leadership councils. ● June 24 District Stakeholder Meeting (BOE, Admin, KTA, KTSEA, Parents, Students) ● July 25 Stakeholder Meeting (BOE, Admin, KTA, KTSEA, Parents, Students)

- July 29, 2025 district policy adopted by the Board of Education: The policy must be published on its website - including translation in the 12 most spoken languages.
- By Sept 1, 2026 the District must publish an annual report on its website detailing the enforcement of the policy including demographic data