524.5 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. CELL PHONE USE

The school board directs the superintendent and school district administration to establish rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of cell phones in schools. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of cell phones on student behavior, mental health and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels or similar criteria.

V. 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 (District-Wide Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition)
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)

Resources:
Away for the Day (www.awayfortheday.org)
MASSP/MESPA, *The Cell Phone Toolkit* (July 2024)

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