Southern Kern Unified School District

Personal Device Policy

Personal Devices must be in the off position, in backpacks throughout the school day.

A personal device is defined as devices such as cell phones, airpods/headphones, tablets, laptops, gaming devices, smartwatches or any eyeglasses/smart glasses that record, and any device that connects to the internet or a cellular network, to include Wi-Fi and bluetooth.

The Southern Kern Unified School District acknowledges the importance of communication between students and parents, particularly when it is essential or in emergency situations. Furthermore, the district recognizes that instructional time is precious and school time must be protected from unnecessary disruptions. There is also growing evidence that increased screen time and social media use is linked to teenage depression and anxiety.

Therefore, students may be permitted to have in their backpack in the off position, a cell phone/personal device (with parent permission) on campus during the school day while attending school-sponsored activities, or while under the supervision of a school district employee. **Cell phones and other personal communication devices, including smartwatches, smart glasses, must be in the off position, in backpacks throughout the school day.** Students shall be allowed to possess and use personal devices in conjunction with being in school under the following parameters:

- Personal devices are to be turned off and put away upon entering the school campus. Teachers may grant permission for specific learning activities or a staff member may give permission for use in another school building, but SKUSD staff members must expressly give permission.
- No student shall use a personal device with camera, video or voice recording function in any way or under any circumstances, which infringe on the privacy rights of other students or staff. This includes but is not limited to the video recording of staff, other students, fights, peer conflicts, and medical emergencies. Education code 78907 and 57578 state it is not permissible for students to record others on campus without their permission.
- Permission for student possession or use of a personal device may be revoked by parents or administration for inappropriate use.
- The Southern Kern Unified School District assumes no liability for the damage, loss or misuse of the personal device by the student or another person. Staff will not be responsible for any damage that results from confiscation in situations where use has been violated.
- When in the Office, personal devices must be turned off and put away. Phones may be confiscated during disciplinary meetings.
- At any time during a school activity, a school official may give specific direction regarding student use or non-use of a personal device and the student is expected to comply.

Progressive Discipline Plan

1st Offense - Student can pick up their device in the office after school.

2nd Offense - A parent/guardian must pick up the device in the office during office hours.

3rd Offense - Parent/guardian must pick up the device in the office during office hours. At that time, a

conference between school administrator and parent/guardian will be held.
4th Offense - In-school suspension/alternative to suspension. Additional consequences and a phone misuse contract with the parent and the student.
Continued Offenses may result in further in-school suspensions/Alternative to Suspension/Off Campus Suspension. Student will no longer be allowed to bring a personal device to school.
Severe Offense - Student who refuses to adhere to teacher/staff request to put phone away may be subject to additional disciplinary actions, including suspension pending expulsion from school
***Any personal device usage determined to have occurred during school hours, even after the fact, will be enforced by the progressive discipline model.

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