Issue Date: December 19, 2025

Model Policy on Student Use of Cell Phones

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of LNSU to maintain a cell phone-free school environment to promote focus, improved mental health, and increased social cohesion among our students.

The goal of this policy is to enable both students and teachers to work free from distractions that impact learning by prohibiting student use of and access to cell phones and other prohibited devices during the academic day from arrival to dismissal.

Definitions[1]

1. **"Cell phone"** means any device capable of using cellular technology to facilitate voice service through a commercial telecommunications company, regardless of whether the device can access internet services and electronic mail.
2. **"Other prohibited device"** means any non-school-issued personal electronic device that connects to cellular networks, the internet, or has wireless capabilities (e.g. smartwatches, earbuds, and smart glasses).
3. **"Individualized health care plan"** means a written document developed by a school nurse, in collaboration with parents, students, and other relevant professionals, to outline specific health care needs and management strategies tailored to the unique health condition of a student.
4. **"Parent"** means a parent of a student and includes legal guardians who are legally authorized to make education decisions for the student.
5. **"School"** means any public school, approved independent school, or career and technical education center located in Vermont.
6. **"Student"** means an individual currently enrolled in or registered at a school located in Vermont, as defined in (5).

Administrative Responsibilities

The superintendent, head of school, or designee shall establish procedures that outline:

1. the daily routines, staff responsibilities, and communication strategies to uphold the intent of this policy;

[1] 16 V.S.A. § 582 Definitions

2. an implementation plan for each school to provide storage of all students' cell phones and other prohibited devices;
3. how staff monitor compliance (e.g. prohibition includes restrooms, locker rooms, buses), where devices are stored, and how exceptions are communicated (including explanation in student handbook); and,
4. details regarding supervision on field trips or how district-operated after-school programs handle student access to cell phones.

Exceptions

Students will be permitted to use a cell phone or other personal electronic device if they:

1. require a cell phone/ personal electronic device as part of their individualized health care plan, individualized education program, or 504 plan, which shall be documented according to applicable state and federal law (or in a manner that the superintendent, head of schools, or designee deems appropriate);
2. have been granted permission by an administrator for an academic, school-sponsored athletic, or cocurricular purpose, for the most limited use reasonably possible; or
3. require a cell phone/ personal electronic device for compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431–11435.

Each superintendent, head of school, or designee shall establish procedures for verifying exceptions as outlined above. With respect to accommodations documented in an individualized student plan (IEP or 504) or as required for compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the process shall give preference to the use of district-owned devices first.

Family and Guardian Communication During the School Day

The superintendent, head of school, or designee shall establish procedures to ensure families can communicate with students during the school day.

Enforcement Actions

The superintendent, head of school, or designee shall establish procedures which describe the sequence of consequences and the process for contacting parents or guardians when a student has violated the policy.

Legal Citations

16 V.S.A. § 582 Definitions

16 V.S.A. § 583 Student use of cell phones and personal electronic devices in schools

16 V.S.A. § 822(a) School district to maintain public high schools or pay tuition