

## STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Education Law §2803 requires each school district adopt a policy restricting the use of “internet-enabled devices” during the entire school day on school grounds. The Board of Education recognizes that students may have personal electronic devices that can perform different functions. Such devices include “internet-enabled devices” defined as: any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, smart glasses, or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications. These devices do not include any such device supplied by the district for educational purposes (e.g., chromebooks).

**School Day:** The school day shall mean the entirety of every instructional day during all instructional and non-instructional time. This includes homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time.

**School Grounds:** The school grounds shall mean in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a district elementary, middle or high school facility.

### Communication with Parents

For purposes of this policy, the term parents includes persons in parental relation. To minimize distractions during the school day, parents who need to communicate with their child are asked to call the school’s main office phone number for urgent matters. Additionally, a student who needs to speak to their parents may go to an office to request permission. Each school’s building written practices will be reviewed at least annually and will be communicated to students and families.

### Exemptions:

As required by Education Law §2803, this policy provides for exceptions that will be reviewed and approved by district administration (e.g., IEP/Section 504). Additionally, a healthcare exception may be approved by district administration if the need for an internet-enabled device (e.g., cell phone access) is specifically documented by a medical or clinical professional.

Parents must submit their documents and requests to the Special Services Department for approval. Under any of these exceptions, devices may only be used for the purposes outlined in the exception and the device must be silenced and put away when not in use, to the extent compatible with the reason for the exception.

Exemptions also include the following:

- Authorization by a teacher, principal, or the school district for a specific educational purpose.
- Usage in the event of an emergency.
- Usage for translation services.
- Usage on a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination, by an administrator or their designee, for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member.
- Or, where required by law.

## **School Protocols:**

**Middle School and High School:** At the middle and high school level, students must place their cell phones in their lockers. District leadership may select a storage alternative that complies with the above cited law.

## **Ensuring Adherence to the Policy**

Enforcement of this policy is chiefly the responsibility of the building administration and school staff. Students will be reminded of this policy regularly and consistently, especially at the start of the school year and after returning from breaks.

The District's "Distraction Free Schools" protocols will be shared with staff, students, and families yearly. The district will exercise reasonable care to maintain the security of devices that are held by the district, but cannot guarantee the devices will be secure.

The district may not impose suspension from school if the only grounds for the suspension are that the student accessed an internet-enabled device as prohibited by this policy. Each school will follow the District's Code of Conduct when imposing consequences and develop a plan with parental communication for students who do not adhere to this policy.

Beginning September 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the district will publish an annual report on its website detailing the enforcement of this policy over the past year, including non-identifiable demographic information of students who have faced disciplinary action for non-compliance with this policy, and an analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement of this policy. If a statistically significant disparate enforcement impact is identified, the report will include a plan to mitigate such disparate enforcement.

## Cross-ref:

4526, Computer Use in Instruction

5300, Code of Conduct

Ref: *Price v. New York City Board of Education*, 16 Misc.3d 543 (2007)

NYSED, *Prohibition of Cell Phones and Electronic Devices in New York State Assessments*, [www.nysed.gov/educator-integrity/prohibition-cell-phones-and-electronic-devices-new-york-state-assessments](http://www.nysed.gov/educator-integrity/prohibition-cell-phones-and-electronic-devices-new-york-state-assessments).

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