
Smartphone Use Policy 3-502

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent rules governing student possession and use of smartphones while at school or under the supervision and control of District employees, in accordance with applicable law.

Scope:

The District recognizes the importance of creating a positive learning environment that is free from distractions, including those that may arise from the use of smartphones. The District also recognizes that excessive student use of smartphones during the school day can negatively impact student learning, safety, and well-being.

This policy applies during the school day, including while on campus and during school-supervised activities.

1. Definitions

Smartphone/Cell Phone means any personal mobile device capable of communication, internet access, messaging, or recording audio or visual content.

School Day means the period during which a student is on school grounds or under the supervision and control of District employees.

Instructional Time means the portion of the school day during which students are engaged in educational activities, lessons, or instructional programs under the immediate supervision and control of a certificated employee of the District. Instructional time does not mean recess or unstructured breaks or periods when students are not under supervision and actively engaged in educational activities.

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Revised on: N/A

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The policies are developed in collaboration with the Small School Districts' Association for general informational, educational and procedural purposes only and are not intended to constitute legal advice for any specific situation.

2. General Rule

- The District may limit student use of smartphones during the school day, as necessary to ensure student safety and well-being. In establishing and/or revising smartphone policies and regulations, the District shall provide for significant stakeholder input (including students, parents/guardians, and staff). This Policy shall be reviewed and updated at least every five (5) years.
- The District shall ensure that implementation of this policy is consistent, nondiscriminatory, and respectful of student rights, including privacy and disability accommodation requirements.
- The District may limit or prohibit smartphone use:
 - o During instructional time,
 - o During the school day (including passing periods and lunch),
 - o At school-sponsored activities, as determined appropriate by the Superintendent or designee.

3. Required Exceptions

In accordance with law, a student shall not be prohibited from possessing or using a smartphone in any of the following circumstances:

- In the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When a teacher or administrator grants permission, subject to reasonable limitations.
- When necessary for the student's health or well-being, as determined by a licensed medical professional.
- When required by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.

4. Student Conduct and Discipline

Failure to comply with District rules governing smartphone use may constitute a violation of District discipline policies.

Any discipline imposed for violations shall be:

- Progressive,
- Consistent, and
- Proportionate to the conduct involved.

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5. Privacy and Data Protection

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to authorize the District to access, monitor, or collect data from a student's smartphone except as permitted by law.

6. Administrative Discretion

Site administrators and classroom teachers may impose additional limitations or permissions based on school needs, grade levels, or classroom management considerations.

7. Enforcement and Discipline

Students who violate this policy may be subject to consequences, including:

- Confiscation of the device
- Loss of phone privileges
- Additional disciplinary actions consistent with the District's student discipline policy

8. Communication with Parents/Guardians

Each school shall clearly communicate its smartphone rules to families at the beginning of each school year and upon a student's enrollment.

9. Emergencies

In emergency situations, students may use smartphones to communicate with families or emergency services as needed.

Administrative Regulations

1. General Rules

The District shall provide training to staff on policy enforcement and student rights.

The District may restrict student use of smartphones during the school day as follows:

- Smartphones shall be turned off or set to silent mode during instructional time.
- Smartphones shall be kept out of sight unless expressly permitted during instructional time.
- Additional restrictions may apply during non-instructional time as determined by the site administrator.

Students may only use smartphones under the following circumstances, unless otherwise stated in School-Level Rules:

- Before the start of the school day and after dismissal (unless otherwise restricted).
- When specifically authorized by a teacher or administrator for the following reasons:
 - Instructional purposes;
 - For emergency or safety situations; and/or
 - Other appropriate educational or operational reasons.
- In accordance with the required statutory exceptions set forth in Board Policy.

2. School-Level Rules

Each site shall develop clear and age-appropriate rules for smartphone during the school day, including during instructional and non-instructional time (e.g. in classrooms, hallways, lunch, recess, passing periods, etc.)

Each school shall clearly communicate its smartphone rules at the beginning of each school year and upon a student's enrollment at the school.

3. Storage Requirements

When student use of smartphones is restricted, students shall store smartphones in a manner that minimizes disruption, including:

- In backpacks, lockers, or other designated areas in the School-Level Rules; or
- In classroom storage systems when required by staff.

4. Enforcement and Confiscation

- District staff shall enforce this regulation consistently, in a non-discriminatory manner. Enforcement may include progressive interventions such as:
 - o Verbal reminder
 - o Temporary confiscation during class
 - o Parent/guardian notification
 - o Administrative referral

Repeated violations may result in additional consequences consistent with District discipline policies.

- If a smartphone is confiscated:
 - o It shall be returned to the student at the end of the class period or school day, unless otherwise required.
 - o Repeated violations may require parent/guardian retrieval.

District staff shall not access the contents of a student's device unless authorized by law.

5. Exception & Support Considerations

Students seeking to use a smartphone under an exception (medical or IEP/504):

- Shall comply with documentation requirements established by the District, where appropriate; and
- Shall use the device only for the approved purpose.

Staff shall honor all IEP and Section 504 accommodations regarding device use.

6. Equity

Site administrators shall work with special education and support teams to ensure enforcement does not disproportionately impact students with disabilities or other protected statuses.