

POLICY #443.5 - STUDENT USE AND/OR POSSESSION OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The District sets forth this Procedure regarding student use and/or possession of personal electronic communication devices because of the educational benefits and concerns produced by such devices.

Educational Benefits. The District acknowledges that technology can provide educational benefits (e.g., bridging cultural and geographical distances, creating critical thinkers, providing collaborative opportunities). The District will utilize technology to improve student achievement and will support students as they learn how to appropriately use technological tools, evaluate the quality of sources, and incorporate technology into daily learning.

Educational Concerns. The District also acknowledges that communication devices present educational concerns. Experience shows that students can misuse communication devices to schedule illegal transactions (e.g., selling drugs); to communicate exam questions and answers; to harass others; to access a home computer or a prohibited website; to communicate other topics that are inappropriate in the educational setting; and/or to invade the privacy of others.

Elementary School Student Use/Possession. Elementary school students are prohibited from using or possessing personal two-way communication devices, including but not limited to cellular phones, smartwatches, or other devices that may be used for two-way communication, while in a District school, on District property, in a motor vehicle used by the District in backpack, or while participating in school-sponsored activities during regular school hours. The following exceptions apply to this general prohibition:

- Students may transport and keep the device in their school lockers/backpacks.
- Students may use and possess such a device for a medical, educational, vocational, or other legitimate use, if the Building Administrator or their designee authorizes such use/possession in writing. The Building Administrator or their designee has discretion in determining whether a requested use or possession will be permitted. The Building Administrator or their designee may revoke such authorization at any time by providing notice to the student and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s)."

Middle School Student Use/Possession. Students at the middle school level shall be permitted to possess personal communication devices at school. However, use of those devices is limited to:

- before and after school in areas designated by the Building Administrator or their designee;

High School Student Use/Possession. Students at the high school level shall be permitted to possess personal communication devices at school. However, use of those devices is limited to:

- before and after school in areas designated by the Building Administrator or their designee;
- at lunch time in areas designated by the Building Administrator or their designee;
- during passing time in areas designated by the Building Administrator or their designee; and
- during pre-approved learning activities in class.

Confiscation. If the Building Administrator believes that a student has violated this Procedure, a law, a school rule, or a school policy, the Building Administrator may confiscate the device. The confiscated device will be returned at an appropriate time to the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or to the owner of the phone.

If the District suspects a possible law violation, the District may turn the item over to law enforcement to the extent permitted by law.

Searches. If the Building Administrator has a reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law, a school rule, or a school policy and believes that a search of the device is likely to produce evidence of that violation, the Building Administrator or their designee has the right to intercept, search, retrieve, receive, and review any and all data that was received, processed, transmitted, or stored by the communication device including, but not limited to, images, files, electronic data, voice mail messages, and text messages. In the absence of reasonable suspicion, the Building Administrator or their designee may also conduct such a search when the student has given consent for the search.

Students are expected to cooperate in searches premised on reasonable suspicion. If a student refuses to cooperate with such a search, the District may make adverse inferences regarding the suspected violation(s) and may revoke the student's use/possession privileges and/or impose disciplinary action on the student.

Violations. If a student violates the law, a school rule, or school policies, the Building Administrator or their designee may revoke the student's use/possession privileges and/or impose disciplinary action on the student.

Lost or Damaged Devices. Students assume responsibility for safeguarding personal belongings, including personal electronic devices. The District will not accept liability for devices that are lost, damaged, or stolen.

Annual Policy Review. On an annual basis, the Administration will provide students enrolled in the District with information concerning this policy in their respective student/parent handbooks.

Date of Board Adoption: 06/08/2026

Previous Adoption/Revision: 04/12/2021, 05/14/13, 10/11/11; 03/09/04; 11/09/99; 10/03/90

Cross Reference: Policy #446.1-Search and Seizure

Statutory References: Wis. Stat. § 118.258

Legal Review: February 2021 – Strang, Patteson, Renning, Lewis & Lacy, s.c.