

JANUARY 2025

LESS TECH, MORE TALK



**GARFIELD RE2
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

DEVICE RESTRICTIONS



Garfield School District No. Re-2

*Heather Grumley, Superintendent
Lisa Pierce, Assistant Superintendent*

*Board of Directors
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Fathom Jensen, Vice President
Scott Bolitho, Board Member
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Personal Technology Device Restrictions Rational

The presence of cell phones during the school day hinders the educational environment, disrupts learning, and compromises social development. Research and experience show that cell phones in school create multiple challenges, impacting students' academic performance, social relationships, communication skills, and engaging meaningfully in their education environment.

Key concerns include:

1. **Distraction from Learning:** Notifications and access to games, apps, and social media pull students' attention away from classroom activities. Even the anticipation of a message can break their focus, making it difficult for students to engage in lessons, comprehend material, and retain what they are learning.
2. **Social Media Misuse:** Students often use cell phones to access social media, where harmful behaviors such as posting inappropriate photos and videos of classmates are all too common. Some posts target others based on appearance, body image, or eating habits, fostering a culture of judgment and ridicule rather than acceptance and kindness. Social media enables the rapid spread of rumors and false information, impacting not only individual students but also the school community as a whole. Inaccurate information spreads quickly, creating misunderstandings, social divisions, and student conflicts.
3. **Safety and Privacy Violations:** Using cell phones in sensitive areas, like locker rooms and bathrooms, introduces significant privacy risks. Unfortunately, some students misuse their phones to capture photos or videos of their peers in these private spaces, leading to serious privacy violations and emotional harm.
4. **Harassment and Cyberbullying:** Cell phones create opportunities for bullying in the form of screenshots, edited photos, and cruel comments. In addition, students may avoid taking risks or participating fully in school out of fear that any embarrassing moment could be posted on social media. Prohibiting cell phones helps reduce bullying and allows students to engage without fear of public ridicule.
5. **Academic Integrity:** The ready access to cell phones increases the potential for academic dishonesty, such as looking up answers during quizzes or tests or sharing homework answers through text or photos. Preventing cell phone use supports a fair academic environment where students can learn with integrity.
6. **Development of Stronger Communication Skills:** Restricting cell phones encourages students to engage in real conversations, developing verbal and nonverbal communication skills essential for success in school, careers, and personal relationships. Without the reliance on digital communication, students learn how to connect with peers, solve conflicts, ask questions, and express themselves effectively.

Restricting cell phone use during the school day helps create a safer, more respectful learning environment where students can concentrate on academics, build authentic social connections, and enjoy a healthier school experience.



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Personal Technology Devices Initiative

Elementary School Procedures

- Students will not be allowed to use Personal Technology Devices once on school grounds, including before and after school.
- Personal Technology Devices, including but not limited to cell phones, SmartWatches, Headphones, and Airpods, must be stored in the student's backpack and turned off when the student is at school. The phone cannot be stored on the student's body or in personal belongings that go to recess or lunch.
- Chromebooks will be used as needed for instructional purposes, but cell phones will not be used for any reason during the school day. Some teachers will ask students to supply headphones for these Chromebooks.
- Personal Technology Devices can NOT be used in restrooms anytime, including before and after school.
- Personal Technology Devices are not allowed on field trips that occur during the school day.
- Personal technology devices can be taken on overnight and long trips, but they will be collected and stored safely.
- Parents and guardians should call the office if they need to contact their child.
- Students can ask to use a phone if needed. If a student is still looking for a parent after school, we would like them to contact a school official and contact their parents together.
- For students who are sick, a phone call will come to the parent from the health clerk's office.
- The sponsor of after-school activities is responsible for handling Personal Technology Devices as they see fit.



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Student Consequences for Personal Technology Device Misuse

First Offense:

- The teacher takes the Personal Technology Device and returns it at the end of the day.
- The student working with a school employee communicates about the offense with their parent/guardian.

Second Offense:

- The Personal Technology Device is taken to the office, parents are contacted, and must retrieve it. The student receives a referral.

Additional Offenses:

- The principal meets with parents to discuss additional consequences.
- The principal and the parent design a plan to support student success, such as leaving the phone in the office all day.

Important Reminders:

- You always have the option to leave your phone at home to avoid any issues.
- Administrators will consider the amount of time between offenses when determining consequences.
- After a cell phone incident has been investigated, additional consequences may be assigned as needed.

Exceptions

- Exceptions will be made for technology devices needed for medical reasons recognized by a certified medical professional.
- Exceptions will be made for accommodations and modifications outlined in the IEP/504.
- Any other exceptions can be made with approval from the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
- If exceptions are granted, they must be well documented and communicated.

These measures are in place to ensure a focused and respectful learning environment for everyone.



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Personal Technology Frequently Asked Questions

How will my child communicate with me during an emergency?

- In the event of a school emergency, our primary focus is ensuring the safety of all students and staff.
- In situations such as a lockdown, students are instructed to prioritize their safety by listening to their teacher and following protocols.
- Emergencies can be chaotic, and we aim to reduce distractions and disruptions while keeping everyone safe and informed.
- District protocols include clear communication that will be sent to families via text, phone, and email during an emergency using our emergency alert system. Be sure you are set up for these alerts, as well as other local emergency alert systems.
- Once authorities deem it safe, students can use their cell phones to contact parents/guardians.

What's new in the cell phone initiative?

- The updated cell phone and personal device initiative sets new guidelines for students' use of personal technology devices—such as cell phones, smartwatches, personal computers, and earbuds—inside Garfield Re-2 school buildings.
- To support a focused and engaging learning environment, students across all grades will be asked to keep these devices put away during the school day. This initiative is designed to reduce distractions and help students make the most of their learning experience.

Why was this initiative updated?

- This updated initiative aims to cultivate learning environments that enhance focus and optimize educational outcomes.
- Our commitment is to provide each student with an exceptional learning experience.
- By focusing on uninterrupted instruction, active participation, meaningful dialogue, and in-person connections, we strive to improve students' concentration, limit disruptions, and promote social engagement over digital distractions.
- Research also indicates that reducing cell phone use during school hours can positively impact academic success and social development.



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Personal Technology Frequently Asked Questions

When does this initiative take effect?

Because several schools already have some parameters that limit the use of cell phones and personal technology devices, this initiative will take place in phases.

- Elementary schools will begin implementation on January 6, 2025.
- Middle schools will implement minimal changes for the 2025-2026 school year.
- RHS will implement changes and new initiatives for the 2025-2026 school year.
- CRHS will pilot this initiative and implement Yondr Pouches by January 6, 2025, assuming all materials are available in a timely manner.

Are there any exceptions to this initiative?

- Exceptions will be made for technology devices needed for medical reasons recognized by a certified medical professional.
- Exceptions will be made for accommodations and modifications outlined in the IEP/504.
- Any other exceptions can be made with approval from the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
- If exceptions are granted, they must be well documented and communicated.

Can students use their cell phones during lunch or breaks?

- Students may use their cell phones when they leave campus.

How can parents reach their children during the school day?

- Parents can contact the school office to relay urgent messages to their children.
- The school will ensure that important messages are delivered promptly.

What should students do if they need to use their cell phones for educational purposes?

- Students will not be asked to use their personal devices or cell phones for educational purposes.
- All students are issued a Chromebook to be used for educational purposes.

How do you ensure the safety and security of my child's phone while it is in the school's possession?

- In the case that a phone(s) is collected, it will be secured and not accessed by school personnel.



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Personal Technology Frequently Asked Questions

How will this policy be enforced?

- To better support student safety and well-being, all staff will model and uphold the standards set by Garfield Re-2 through board policy JICJ.
- Teachers and staff will actively monitor and enforce this policy with students to ensure compliance.
- Students are expected to follow the policy and cooperate with staff members.
- Please see page 4 which outlines the consequences for misuse.

Is this policy based on research or best practices regarding student behavior?

- [Social Media and Youth Mental Health](#)
- [Jonathan Haidt's The Anxious Generation Summary](#)
- [The Evidence for Phone Bans Mounts.pdf](#)

What if I need to communicate with my student after school about pick-up plans?

- Students can use their phones after the last bell to receive information about pick-up plans.
- Please discuss a standard routine for pick-up with your student.
- Elementary schools would like students to come to the office if they don't see their ride.

How will I know if my student is sick?

- Your student should go to the health clerk's office if they do not feel well.
- The health clerk will contact you.

What if my child is anxious about being unable to access his/her phone?

- Set up an appointment with a school administrator or counselor.
- Create an individualized plan to address anxieties.
- Consider a 504 plan
- Exceptions can be requested

Can students use their phones during free periods?

- No, they can access their phone when they leave campus or during after-school activities as allowed by the sponsors or coach.



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Personal Technology Frequently Asked Questions

What other districts are implementing cell phone restrictions?

Districts		
Douglas County	Cherry Creek	Adams 12
Poudre	Boulder Valley	District 49
School District 27J	Colorado Springs 11	Greeley 6
Mesa County Valley 51	Pueblo City 60	Littleton
Harrison	Pueblo County 70	Aspen School District

How can students and parents provide feedback on the new policy?

- Use this [Feedback Form](#)

