

Policy JICJ - Prohibition of Personal Electronic Devices During the School Day

Issued 11/18/2024

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to create a phone-free school environment that fosters a positive learning experience free from electronic distractions. By prohibiting the use of personal electronic devices during the school day, this policy aims to provide an environment that enhances focus and engagement, allowing students to develop the college and career-ready skills outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. Students will have more opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions, collaborate with peers, and cultivate the essential skills necessary for success in college, careers, and life.

This policy has been developed in compliance with the General Appropriations Bill, H. 5100 of 2024, Proviso 1.103 and is applicable to all grades served by James Island Charter High school for the 2024-2025 school year.

The board recognizes that, depending on how they are used, personal and mobile electronic devices, can be either valuable learning tools or a source of disruption in the learning environment. In order to maintain a secure and orderly learning environment, student use and possession of mobile communication, computer, and other wireless devices shall be subject to the limitations as set forth in this policy.

I. Definitions:

A. "Personal electronic device," hereinafter referred to as "device," means any device utilized to access the internet, wi-fi, cellular telephone signals, or to capture images or video. This includes but is not limited to, cell phones, smart watches, tablets, and gaming devices.

B. "Personal Electronic Device accessories," hereinafter referred to as "device accessories," include any wired or wireless accessory or wearable technology that connects to a device and any other accessory commonly used in conjunction with a personal electronic device.

C. "School day" is defined as the period of time that a student is present on the school campus from their arrival (i.e., tardy bell) until afternoon dismissal at the end of the instructional day. This policy may also apply to school buses, field trips, and athletic events. The administration will determine the applicability of this regulation to these activities.

D. "Access" is defined as viewing, holding, wearing, or otherwise using a device for the purpose of communication, internet access, gaming, recording, or any other function commonly associated with devices. During the school day, devices should be powered off and stored as directed by the JICHS. Exceptions granted for medical necessity, authorized classroom use, or other authorized reasons approved in writing are not considered violations of this definition.

E. "Authorized for Classroom Use" is defined as the use of a personal electronic device that is explicitly approved by the Principal or his/her designee in writing. The approval must include alignment with a standards-aligned educational objective that cannot be reasonably achieved using school or district-owned devices. Students must be provided with clear instructions on the appropriate use of devices and ensure their use aligns with the approved educational

objectives. The Principal or his/her designee may revoke approval at any time if it is determined that their use does not meet the intended educational objectives or is causing disruptions.

II. Policy Implementation and Enforcement:

A. During the school day, students are prohibited from accessing their personal electronic devices, unless authorized for classroom use or other pre-approved exception such as medical necessity. Students may not wear or access device accessories during the school day. Students must store their devices and device accessories as directed by JICHS or if no directions provided, in lockers, backpacks, or otherwise inaccessible during the school day. JICHS administration may forbid student possession of devices and device accessories on school property.

B. If explicitly required by a written and approved student's IEP, Medical Plan, or 504 plan, the student shall be allowed to access their personal electronic device for medically or educationally necessary purposes only as described and required for administration of the IEP, Medical Plan or 504 plan.

C. A student who is a member of a volunteer firefighting organization or emergency organization may be authorized to carry a device with written permission from the Principal or his/her designee.

D. If a student violates the preceding rules and referenced policy during the school day, the student will be subject to progressive consequences in the student code of conduct and disciplinary enforcement procedures. See Policy JICDA.

Wired earbuds and/or headphones may be worn in the classroom for instructional purposes in accordance with Authorized Classroom Use as described herein. Wired earbuds/Headphones may not be worn at any other time during the instructional school day. Wireless earbuds, AirPods, and/or headphones are not allowed during the school day.

Students may possess devices such as: mobile telephones, smart phones, smart watches, or other such devices as described above provided such devices are not visible, used, worn, or activated and are kept in the "off" position throughout the instructional school day. Students must keep such devices stored in accordance with JICHS policy for classroom and library storage. For other times during the instructional school day, then stored in a purse, locker, backpack, or other non-visible secure location

Times of authorized use for students are as follows:

- before the beginning of the instructional school day
- after the dismissal bell at the end of the instructional school day
- during classroom instruction when approved in writing and directed by the Principal or his or her designee
- on school buses, field trips, and athletic events as approved by the Principal or his or her designee

Any student who violates this policy is subject to the interventions/consequences of the JICHS Progressive Discipline Plan. Students will be disciplined for their conduct rather than solely for the use of a device. Conduct infractions will follow the guidelines set forth in JICHS Student Code of Conduct.

Other Acceptable Uses

Use of devices as described above are permissible in the following circumstances:

Instructional or educational purposes

Devices as described above may be used during a class period or school activity when specifically approved in writing by the Principal or his or her designee in conjunction with educationally appropriate objectives.

IEP, 504, or healthcare/medical plan

Students may use devices as described above during class time when authorized pursuant to an approved and written individualized education program (IEP), a Section 504 accommodation plan, or a healthcare/medical plan with supportive documentation from the student's physician.

Health, safety, or emergency reasons

The Principal and his or her designee may make exceptions to the restrictions in this policy, in part or in its entirety, for health, safety, or emergency reasons.

School trips or school-sponsored activities

The use, display, or activation of devices as described above during school trips or school sponsored activities shall be at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee, but shall not be disruptive to the activity.

Parent Communication

In the event a parent needs to call to leave a message for their child during the instructional school day, the parent can call the school on the JICHS phone, 843-762-2754.

Responsibility/Liability

Any student who chooses to bring to school a device as described above shall do so at his or her own risk and shall be personally responsible for the security of his or her device. Neither the school personnel nor the board will assume any responsibility for loss, theft, damage, or vandalism to a device described above brought onto school property or for the unauthorized use of any such device.

Cf. JICDA

Adopted 1/23/06; Revised 6/27/16, 8/26/19, 10/24

Legal References:

A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:

a. Section 59-63-280 - Requires board to adopt a policy on student use of electronic devices.

B. General Appropriations Bill, H. 5100 of 2024

a. Proviso 1.103 (SDE: Anti-Bullying/School Safety)