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Distraction-Free Learning Policy for Internet-Enabled Personal Devices

Effective: September 4, 2025

Dear Families,

To create an environment conducive to learning by minimizing distractions caused by cell phones and other personal internet-enabled electronic devices, ensure the safety and focus of all students during school the school day, and follow Education Law §2803, effective August 1, 2025, all New York State schools are required to adopt a policy that prohibits the use of personal internet-enabled devices during the school day on school grounds. An "internet-enabled electronic device" is defined as an electronic device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet. Examples of such devices include cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, laptops, tablets, iPads, and portable music and entertainment systems.

BSEA is committed to fostering a focused, safe, and engaging academic environment for all learners. Beginning **September 4, 2025**, students will no longer be permitted to access or store internet-enabled devices in their bookbags or on their person unless the device is locked in a Yondr pouch during the school day.

Collection and Storage Procedures

To ensure compliance and support of a distraction-free school experience:

- On the first day of school students will be provided with a free, Yondr pouch. Students will keep this pouch in their possession all school year. Students will write their name and class on the pouch.
- Upon arrival, students must **turn off** all personal internet-enabled devices.
- Cellphones and smart watches will be **secured in student assigned Yondr pouches**. Devices secured in pouches will remain in the student's possession. All other devices including personal laptops, tablets, iPads, and portable music and entertainment systems should not be brought into the school.
- Yondr pouches will be **unlocked at dismissal**. Students will bring their pouch home and will return the next school day with the pouch.
- Students who arrive late or leave early will follow check-in/check-out protocols with designated staff in the main office.
- The school is **not responsible** for any lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

In Case of Emergency:

- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, the school will use the DOE Messenger text and voice call system through the NYCSA account to communicate information to parents or guardians.
 - a. Parents and Guardians can access and update the automated messaging system through the New York City Schools Account (NYCA) at: <https://www.schoolsaccount.nyc>. Please contact Ms. Basone or Mr. Myers at 718-240-3790 for assistance with setting up your NYCSA account.

Communication During School Hours

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please use one of the following school numbers:

1. **Main Office:** 718-240-3790
2. **School Counselors:** Liana Wilson & Sidney Solomon 718-240-3790 ext: 4012, 4016, 4013
3. **Parent Coordinator:** Yahya Seifullah 347-854-8755

Students may also request permission to use the main office phone in emergencies.

Authorized Use Exceptions

Students may only use personal devices during the instructional day when:

- Authorized for educational purposes by school staff.
- Required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan such as an Assistive Technology Device (requires documentation from a medical provider or in the students' IEP)
- Needed for a documented medical reason such as blood sugar tracking (requires documentation from a medical provider). Student communication with parents/guardians will occur using school phones.

Families do not need to request an exemption to utilize an Assistive Technology Device detailed in a student's IEP. For 504 plan or medical exemptions, please contact Ms. Cacaci at mcacaci2@schools.nyc.gov. Exemption requests with completed documentation will be approved in writing via email by the Principal within three school days.

Violations & Consequences (Aligned to Chancellor's Regulation A-413)

Students found with an unauthorized internet-enabled device will face the following progressive consequences:

- **1st Offense:** Parent/guardian must retrieve the device from school. Students will be assigned lunch or after-school detention.
- Students who use electronic devices in violation of the NYCPS Discipline Code, the school's policy, Chancellor's Regulation A-413, and/or the NYCPS Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy ("IAUSP") will be subject to progressive discipline. This means that the disciplinary responses will escalate based on the nature and frequency of the violation. As provided in the State law, a student may not be suspended solely on the grounds that the student accessed a personal internet-enabled device in violation of school policy. Repeated incidents of insubordination (i.e. refusal to surrender or store device) **may** result in a suspension **if approved** by the Office of Safety and Youth Development.
- ** If a student forgets their Yondr pouch (**1st Offense**) the phone will be held by Mr. Eisenberg for the day and returned at dismissal. If the student does not have their pouch a second time the phone will be secured by Mr. Eisenberg until a parent/guardian picks it up.
- **If a student loses their pouch, there is a \$25 replacement fee for each lost pouch.**

Use of Devices Outside Bell-to-Bell Instruction

Internet-enabled personal devices may be used at the following times only:

- **Before School:** Students who attend morning programs (prior to 7:50 AM), will have their phones in their possession (not in a Yondr pouch). When students are dismissed from their morning program, they must go to the Tilden Avenue entrance where arrival takes place to open their pouch and place their phones into it for the duration of the school day. Students involved in morning programs are required to lock their phones in their pouches following the conclusion of their morning program.
- **After School:** At 2:46 PM students will be dismissed from their regular school day. Magnets that unlock the pouches will be available at the Tilden Avenue exits and phones will be available for student use.

Thank you for your continued support as we prioritize academic achievement, student wellness, and a safe school culture. Should you have questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us at 718-240-3790.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ADF', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Angela DeFilippis
Principal
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