



NEWS RELEASE

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PSD Takes a Bold Step Towards Student Success with Adoption of New Cell Phone Policy

Gig Harbor, WA – The PSD Board of Directors and Superintendent's Office are proud to announce the adoption of [Policy 3245](#), which will restrict students' use of social media and mobile devices during school hours. The policy was adopted during the July 27 Board of Directors business meeting.

For the past decade, PSD has been permissive in allowing students to bring their own devices and access social media from our district networks. With these new and updated policies, PSD will block all access to social media on district networks and will only permit the use of student's personal devices before and after school, during lunch, or if an administrator explicitly permits them.

"We firmly believe students must learn the necessary skills to be healthy and effective digital humans," Executive Director of Digital Learning Kris Hagel said. "We must do that in a scaffolded environment where we can more directly and strategically teach the skills they need. We have caring adults in our system to help students with these skills, and we must do this work starting from a much more controlled environment."

"After the pandemic, we have seen a substantial increase in poor behaviors regarding cell phones and social media. We have listened to the complaints from teachers and administrators about the ability to manage this in their classrooms and buildings, and this is in response to their concerns," Superintendent Krestin Bahr said. "Parents have also increasingly come to us for help as they see addictive behaviors. While working to manage them at home, they are also looking for more restrictions at school to help their children. To make sure we are providing a learning environment where our students can focus, and a place where our families can trust their students are learning, we knew this was a needed step forward for the district."

During the development of the new policy, PSD administrators took input from staff, students and parents.

"The policy was developed collaboratively, involving valuable input from both educators and students. Enforcing this policy consistently across all schools will be crucial to its success. While acknowledging the challenges of enforcement, the district is dedicated to maintaining a uniform approach, ensuring that the policy's benefits are realized by students in every classroom," Bahr said.

[New research](#) has come out recently around the harm to students with access to cell phones and social media before they are developmentally ready to access these services.

“Our Board of Directors has taken this bold step towards fostering a healthier learning environment. Education is our top priority and we are committed to the success of our students,” Board of Directors President Natalie Wimberley said. “Recognizing the impact technology has on education, and that social media has on a student’s health and wellness, was a driving force behind this decision.”

The Peninsula School District has a strategic plan goal specifically around innovation. We also are building a district rich in technology resources for teachers and students.

“We do not believe that these new restrictions will hamper innovation but will allow our teachers and students to be able to focus more on instruction and find the appropriate avenues to use the resources we provide to every student to explore and create with technology while working to grow into healthy digital humans who use technology resources as tools, and not the inverse of being controlled by the technology they have,” Hagel said.

For more information please reach out to Communication Coordinator Danielle Chastaine at chastained@psd401.net.

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