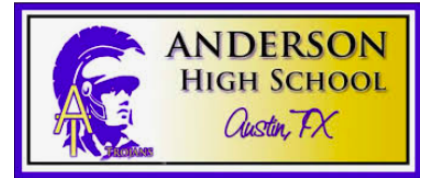


Anderson Personal Device Policy

Updated 10/31/2025



Purpose:

Research has consistently demonstrated that personal devices are a distraction in the educational environment and can also lead to decreased instructional outcomes and increased truancy, tardies, and disciplinary issues.

Definitions and clarification:

Per [Austin ISD Board Policy FNCE](#), “A personal wireless communication device means an electronic device, other than a device issued to an enrolled student by the District, that is capable of transmitting or receiving data, such as text messages, including a mobile telephone, cell phone, tablet, a laptop computer, or smart watch.”

For Anderson’s purposes, a personal device includes any electronic device other than the district issued Chromebook. This includes smart watches, tablets, wireless headphones, personal laptops/computers/chromebooks, and handheld gaming devices.

Classroom Device Policy

Personal devices must be completely out of sight and out of use during school hours anywhere on the Anderson campus.

To reiterate, during any school hours and in any location on campus to include hallways and bathrooms, personal devices must be put away and not in use.

Special Exemptions

Per Austin ISD Board Policy FNCE:

A student is authorized to use a personal wireless communication device in the following circumstances:

- It is necessary to implement an IEP through special education, an IAP created under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794), or a similar program or plan;
- The student has a documented need based on a directive from a qualified physician; or
- The use is necessary to comply with a health or safety requirement imposed by law or included in the District's or school's safety protocols.

In short: Cell phones will only be allowed as part of a student’s special education IEP plan or with a documented medical need that is reflected in a student’s 504 or medical plan, and that allowance will come with clear expectations for responsible use during school hours.

Disciplinary Matrix

Personal Device Misuse Disciplinary Matrix	
1st Offense	• Campus personnel will direct students to give them the device. ◦ Students are required to comply with directives. • Campus personnel will take possession of the device and store in a designated location. • Parents/Guardians will be notified • The first offense will be documented. • <u>The student</u> may pick up the device at the end of the school day after verifying ownership.
2nd Offense	• Campus personnel will direct students to give them the device. ◦ Students are required to comply with directives. • Campus personnel will take possession of the device and store in a designated location. • Parents/Guardians will be notified. • The second offense will be documented. • <u>Only a parent/guardian</u> may pick up the device at the end of the school day after verifying ownership.
3rd Offense	• Campus personnel will direct students to give them the device. ◦ Students are required to comply with directives. • Campus personnel will take possession of the device and store in a designated location. • Parents/Guardians will be notified. • The third offense will be documented. <u>The campus may impose additional consequences as outlined in the Student Success Guide for continued refusal to follow the rules.</u> • <u>Only the parent/guardian</u> may pick up the device <u>the next school day</u> after verifying ownership or <u>the parent may schedule a conference</u> with the designated campus personnel to create a plan in order to retrieve the device earlier.
4th+ Offense	• Campus personnel will direct students to give them the device. ◦ Students are required to comply with directives. • Campus personnel will take possession of the device and store in a designated location. • Parents/Guardians will be notified. • The fourth and subsequent offense will be documented. <u>The campus may impose additional consequences as outlined in the Student Success Guide for continued refusal to follow the rules.</u> • <u>Only the parent</u> may pick up the device, after verifying ownership, <u>after 48 hours</u> or <u>the parent must schedule a conference</u> with the designated campus personnel to create a plan in order to retrieve the device earlier.
ANY Refusals	Any refusal to turn over a personal device upon the request of a staff member will result in an immediate escalated consequence to ISS and an immediate escalation to the 3rd offense (parent needs to pick up, and only after 24 hours), duration to be determined based on student device history.
Repeated Offenses	Campus personnel will follow up with students who demonstrate repeated device violations to assess needs. Referrals to the counselor or other campus support may be made as part of a supportive intervention plan.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I need to reach my child during the school day?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning, and the best policy is to plan and communicate ahead. However, we know that sometimes things come up and you need to be able to get a message to your child during the day. If you need to contact your child during school, you may call the front office and your message will be delivered to your child's classroom. If there is a last-minute change in plans for after school, please call the front office, but feel free to text your child that information as well. They will be able to access it and get your message when they turn on their phone after the 4:35 dismissal bell.

What if my child needs to reach me during the school day?

All classrooms and offices are equipped with landline phones. If it is essential that a student contact you during the school day, they should do so during passing periods or lunch, not during class time. With teacher permission, and without interfering with instructional time, students may use a classroom phone during passing periods. During lunch, students must use the phone in the front office.

What if my child is ill and needs to call home?

Any student experiencing symptoms of illness should report to the nurse's office. Our nurse will work with your student to determine next steps and will call home from her office if needed. Students should never call home and request to be picked up due to illness without seeing the nurse first per AISD policy.

What if there is a school emergency?

In case of a school emergency, we direct our students to safety first, following our school emergency preparedness protocol. Under those protocols, first responders do not want students using cell phones. In an actual emergency, when first responders or AISD Safety & Security determine it is safe and appropriate, students may use their phones to let parents know they are okay. As a reminder, when the campus enters a serious safety protocol like a lockdown or evacuation, all parents are sent a message through the parent notification system, along with potential next steps.

Are there exceptions for students with accommodations that require the use of a cell phone or personal device?

We do have students who will require the use of their phone for health and accessibility reasons. Students with 504 or Individual Education Plan (IEP) accommodation plans may be allowed to use their devices as specified in the plan. Please contact the grade-level administrator if you have further questions about this.

For your information:

Some Key Statements and Light Reading (for fun):

(With my apologies to all my English and Social Studies teachers for not citing my sources using APA, MLA, or Chicago style)

"... students openly admit their cell phones distract them and that they focus better in school without them"

["Why Schools Should Ban Cell Phones in the Classroom—and Why Parents Have to Help" - Boston University](#)

"Just as more kids began spending more time with their phones, we saw a massive spike in depression and mental illness"

["Should schools ban cellphones?" - Fordham Institute](#)

"Our data confirm that students expect texting to disrupt their classroom learning, and that texting does disrupt learning. The real score declines (27%) approximated the expected declines (33%)."

["EFFECTS OF CLASSROOM CELL PHONE USE ON EXPECTED AND ACTUAL LEARNING" - Multiple Authors, Sterling College](#)

"...cell phone use was significantly and negatively associated with test scores regardless of student sex and grade point average."

["Relations Between College Students' Cell Phone Use During Class and Grades" - Chris A. Bjornsen, Kellie J. Archer, American Psychological Association](#)