USE OF PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES and SOCIAL MEDIA

Background

The purpose of this procedure is to regulate the use of Personal Mobile Devices (PMD) and social media access in Wolf Creek Public Schools in alignment with Ministerial Order #014/2024. This procedure aims to enhance the educational environment by reducing distractions, promoting responsible digital citizenship, and safeguarding the privacy and security of students and staff.

The use of personal mobile devices to support instruction is encouraged in division schools.

Our goal is to help students and teachers learn how to use these tools in safe, respectful, and appropriate ways. Supporting our students in navigating the ever-changing world of digital tools is vital for preparing them for life outside of the classroom.

Definition

Instructional Time includes all time during a scheduled period when students are in the classroom or time outside the classroom where teachers take responsibility for ensuring that learning activities for students are directed toward achieving the outcomes of approved programs of study and instructional support plans.

Personal mobile devices are any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate with or access the internet, such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop, or smartwatch.

Social media refers to online platforms and apps designed primarily for social interaction, content sharing, and networking. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, where users create and exchange posts, comments, and multimedia.

Scope

This administrative procedure applies to all schools, outreach schools, and special programs within the Division.

Procedures

1. Personal mobile devices must be on silent or powered off and stored out of view **during instructional time** in all school settings. Exceptions may be granted by school

administrators for educational purposes, health care reasons, or other circumstances deemed appropriate.

2. Common social media sites will be blocked for students on the School Division Network and school division-owned devices used by students. The list of restricted sites will be updated as new sites and platforms emerge.

3. The use of personal mobile devices is permitted in division schools upon approval of the school principal in order to support specific educational activities. Such use must be directly related to achieving a learning outcome and supervised by the classroom teacher.

   3.1 Students and staff who use applications and online services accessed via personal mobile devices during these instructional periods must comply with the Division's Responsible Use Agreement for Technology.

4. Principals may have additional guidelines or restrictions for the use of personal devices in their school, and every teacher may have additional guidelines or restrictions for the use of personal devices in their classroom.

5. Students and staff are responsible for the content of the data stored on, accessed by, or communicated from their personal devices.

   5.1 Unauthorized use of personal mobile devices to capture or share images and videos of students, staff, or school property is strictly prohibited. Such actions may result in disciplinary measures and must be reported immediately to the school administration.

   5.2 Personally identifiable information about others shall not be shared via personal mobile devices or through social media in connection with the school or during school division events except where authorized by the Protection of Privacy Act, Personal Information Act, and Access to Information Act.

6. PMDs are not to be taken into test or examination settings unless students have been given permission to do so.

7. PMDs are not to be used in settings such as change rooms or washrooms that have the potential to violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.

8. PMDs are not to be used in private counseling rooms without the consent of the counselor and all participants in the counseling session.

9. Staff are expected to model the expectations of this administrative procedure and limit their use of personal mobile devices to the operational and instructional needs of their instructional spaces.

10. Students who bring PODs to the school are expected to comply with all parts of Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who consistently refuse to comply with the Division's procedures for using PMDs in the school setting may be subject to disciplinary measures detailed in the school's rules, as well as the steps outlined in Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Discipline and Suspension.

11. The Principal will develop and inform the school community of the procedures for acceptable use of PMDs in the event of an emergency situation such as a lockdown or evacuation.

12. The Superintendent requires principals to clearly articulate procedures relating to PMDs to students, parents, and staff annually.

    12.1 When mobile devices are temporarily confiscated from students by staff, devices must be securely stored.

    12.2 Discipline for inappropriate possession and/or usage shall be progressive and may include:

        12.2.1 Asked to put away;

        12.2.2 Conversation with the student and/or parent;

        12.2.3 Temporary confiscation, where student or parent may regain collect the personal mobile device at a later time; and/or;

        12.2.4 Prohibition of personal mobile devices on school property.

        12.2.5 Prohibition of access to school division network privileges.

        12.2.6 Suspension and/or expulsion.

13. PMDs are valuable electronic devices. The security and storage of these items are the sole responsibility of the owner/user. The Division assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair, or replacement of PMDs.

    13.1 PMDs that are taken temporarily from students by teachers or administrators must be securely stored.

Reference: Education Act Section 31, 33, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222
Ministerial Order #014/2024
Access to Information Act
Protection of Privacy Act
Personal Information Protection Act

Approved: May 2017
Reviewed/Revised: July 2018, August 2019, August 2024, August 2025