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Policy 524.5*

524.5 PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

I. PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to support the school district's focus on learning in alignment with the district's mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools. Possession and use of personal electronic communication devices must be regulated to ensure that such devices do not disrupt or interfere with the education process or school operations, impair the safety, welfare, and privacy of students and staff, or are used as part of an act of academic dishonesty.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

To minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment and to support school environments in which students can engage fully with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the school board has determined that the use of personal electronic communication devices by students during school hours should be limited.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bell-to-Bell" means from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day to begin instructional time until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day. "Bell-to-bell" includes lunch and time in between class periods.
- B. "Cell Phone" means a personal device capable of making calls, transmitting pictures or video, or sending or receiving messages through electronic means. The definition of a cell phone includes a non-smartphone that is limited to making phone calls or sending text messages, and a smartphone that encompasses these features.
- C. "Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.
- D. "Instructional Time" means any structured or unstructured learning experiences that occur from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day.
- E. "Personal Electronic Communication Device" means any personal device capable of connecting to a cell phone, the internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly connecting to another similar device. Personal electronic communication devices may include cell phones, wearable devices

such as smartwatches, personal headphones, earbuds, or pods, laptops, tablets, virtual reality devices, and other devices with the aforementioned characteristics.

- F. “Stored” means a cell phone or personal electronic communication device not being carried on the student’s person, including not in the student’s pocket, backpack, locker, purse, etc. Storage options as determined by the school administration.

IV. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE USE AND STORAGE

A. Personal Electronic Communication Device Use

1. Students are prohibited from using or having access to personal electronic communication devices from “bell to bell”.
2. Elementary Schools (K-6) & High School (7-12)
 - a. Students are prohibited from using personal electronic communication devices on school premises from bell-to-bell, which includes but is not limited to instructional time, lunch periods, recess, school-sponsored programs, events or activities, or any other time during the designated school day from “bell to bell”.
 - b. All personal electronic communication devices shall either be kept in designated areas and turned off or left at home.

B. Off-Campus School-Sponsored Activities

School administration may establish guidelines for personal electronic communication device possession and use during off-campus school-sponsored activities, such as extracurricular activities, outdoor and service trips, and school field trips. These guidelines will be provided at pre-activity meetings, activity-specific permission slips, and by other means as appropriate in the circumstances.

V. LIMITATIONS ON USE OF AND STORAGE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

A. Limitations on Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

1. Personal electronic communication devices may not be used in any manner from “bell to bell.”
2. Devices, including but not limited to personal electronic communication devices, with audio, video, or photo-taking capabilities shall not be used at any time in locker rooms, bathrooms, or other locations where the presence of such devices poses an unreasonable risk to the safety, welfare, or privacy of others. Confiscation and search of such devices will occur if found in these areas.
3. Personal electronic communication devices may not be used to engage in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or other activity prohibited under federal or state law or under school district policy.
4. Personal electronic communication devices shall not be used during a lockdown drill, a fire drill, or a similar safety drill.

B. Storage of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

Students shall keep their personal electronic communication devices in a secure place as designated by the administration and approved by the superintendent (at home, designated area).

V. EXCEPTIONS

- A. A student may use a personal electronic communication device to monitor or address a health concern or medical condition as outlined by their Section 504 plan, upon permission granted by their medical doctor and school administration to use it as a medical device, CGM, or Insulin Management Pump.
- B. The building principal or designee will collaborate with the MLL (Multi Lingual Learner) coordinator to determine the necessity of a cell phone accommodation for communication.
- C. A personal electronic communication device may be stored in student vehicles parked on school district property, provided that the device is not removed from the vehicle while on school district property.
- D. Students who need to make a call may request permission to use a telephone in the building office.

VI. DISCIPLINE

If a student violates this policy, district staff or administrators will take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures:

- A. Place the student's personal device in the school's central office to be picked up by the student's parent or guardian during regular business hours.
- B. Schedule a conference with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the student's personal device use.

VII. SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The school district is not responsible for, nor is it required to investigate, any lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic communication devices brought onto school grounds or the bus or school-sponsored activities or events.
- B. The school board directs the superintendent and school district administration to establish additional rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of personal electronic communication devices in schools as the superintendent and school district administration find appropriate. These rules shall be consistent with this policy and other applicable school district policies. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels, or pursuant to similar criteria.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 13.32 (Educational Data)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.73 (School Cell Phone Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.166 (Limit on Screen Time for Children in Preschool and

Kindergarten)

Minn. Stat. § 125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)

Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)

29 U.S.C. § 794 (Nondiscrimination under Federal Grants and Programs)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)

Away for the Day (www.awayfortheday.org)

MASSP/MESPA, *The Cell Phone Toolkit* (July 2024)