



Overview of FOCUS: ON & Georgia Law for Distraction-Free Learning

As a result of HB 340 (2025) and now HB 1009, the state legislature has strengthened the Distraction-Free Learning Environment to now include all schools, K-12, in Georgia. Henry County Schools adopted Policy JCDAF last year to remove cell phones, smartwatches, or other electronic communication devices from the hands of students during the school day.

FOCUS: ON VIDEO INTRODUCTION

Key Parts of the Law

The law states students may not view, hold, wear or use a personal electronic device for the purpose of communication, listening to music, internet access, or recording when on school property from when the bell starts the school day to when it concludes the day for all grades, kindergarten to 12th grade. Parents who need to contact their students during instructional time should do so by contacting the front office of the school. Additionally, the law highlights ways in which student devices are stored that include, but are not limited to, lockers, pouches, or a designated space in the classroom. Essentially, once the student enters the school building in the morning until they leave school building in the afternoon, personal electronic devices must be off, out of sight, and unused.

This should also include field trips or off-campus activities during the instructional day.

District Policy and Code of Conduct

Students are prohibited from using personal electronic devices or accessories during the instructional school day. **A personal electronic device refers to any device utilized to access the Internet, Wi-Fi, cellular telephone signals or to capture images or video.** This includes but is not limited to, cell phones, smart watches, tablets, and gaming devices. This also includes the use of accessories. Although students may possess a personal electronic device, it should not be turned on or utilized for any function. The above-specified devices should be turned off, placed out of sight, and not used during instructional days. This includes established school day hours and off-campus activities during the school day. This violates **HCS Code of Conduct Level 1 Violation (1.7): Misuse of Personal Electronic Devices - Unauthorized possession, displaying or using a cell phone, or other electronic communication device during the school day.** This includes, but is not limited to, smartwatches, headphones, earphones, earbuds, and other listening devices.



FOCUS: ON - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the "Focus: ON" campaign, and what is its primary goal?

- The "Focus: ON" campaign is designed to maintain a distraction-free learning environment in HCS for the 2026-2027 school year. Its primary goal is to maximize student learning by minimizing digital distractions. The campaign encourages students and staff to activate their "focus mode" during the instructional day.

Is this the law?

- Yes, the state of Georgia passed the Georgia Distraction-Free Education Act (HB 340/HB1009) which bans the use of personal electronic devices in grades K-12 during the school day.

What devices are covered by the new Personal Electronic Devices policy?

- The policy applies to all personal electronic devices, defined as any device used to access the internet, Wi-Fi, cellular signals, or to capture images or video. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, and gaming devices. Additionally, accessories such as wired or wireless accessories, wearable technology connecting to a device, and other common accessories like earbuds, headphones, and smart glasses are also covered.

What should students do with their devices during the instructional day?

- During the instructional day, all personal electronic devices must be turned off, placed out of sight, and not used. Students are encouraged to store their electronic devices in their personal belongings or lockers.

How can parents reach their child in case of an emergency during the school day?

- If parents need to reach their child during the school day, they should contact the school's front office. Urgent messages will be delivered promptly by school staff.

Are devices allowed on school buses?

- Students are permitted to use their personal electronic devices while on the school bus before and after the designated instructional day. However, devices cannot be used during the loading and unloading of the bus.

What if my child requires a device for medical purposes?

- Families should work directly with school administration to discuss accommodations for medical reasons.

Can students use phones between classes?

- No, students are required to store their personal electronic devices away during the entire instructional day.

What is considered the "instructional day" under this policy?

- The "instructional day" includes the entire school day from bell-to-bell. Essentially, once the student enters the school in the morning until they leave school in the afternoon, personal electronic devices must be off, out of sight, and unused.

What will happen if my student uses their cell phone during school day / consequences?

- Any student that uses an electronic device during the instructional day may be found in violation of the HCS Code of Conduct and receive a consequence. Code of Conduct consequences may include: verbal warning, parent contact, device confiscation, ISS, or OSS.