

Distraction Free Schools Policy

Policy 1250

POLICY I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to implement New York State's Distraction-Free Schools Law by creating a focused learning environment for students, minimizing distractions, improving academic outcomes, and fostering positive social interaction during the school day.

II. Definitions

Personal Internet-Enabled Device: Any portable electronic device capable of communication, such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, and music players. School-provided instructional devices are excluded.

School Day: Includes all time on the school schedule, encompassing instructional time, homeroom, lunch, recess, and study hall.

III. Policy Statement

Students are not allowed to use personal internet-enabled devices on school grounds during the school day.

IV. Permitted Devices

School-issued instructional devices may be used as intended.

Simple cell phones without internet capabilities may be permitted.

V. Storage of Devices

BRICK Buffalo requests that students keep their personal devices at home. If a family chooses to allow a student to bring a device to school, it must be stored away where they cannot be accessed throughout the school day. BRICK Buffalo is not responsible for lost or stolen devices and will not conduct investigations into such matters.

VI. Exceptions

Device use is allowed only under specific circumstances:

With authorization from school staff for educational purposes.

For managing healthcare needs as documented by a physician, IEP, or 504 Plan.

During emergencies.

For translation services.

For student caregivers on a case-by-case basis as determined by school support staff.

When required by law.

VII. Parent/Guardian Contact during School Day

Parents/guardians should contact the main office via phone or email for urgent messages, and students needing to contact parents/guardians can use a school phone.

VIII. Consequences for Policy Violations

Violations may result in progressive discipline according to school policy, including warnings, device confiscation, parent notification, removal from class, and potential suspension for repeated refusal to store a device. Students cannot be suspended solely for device access or have grades deducted for in-class violations.

IX. Reporting and Review

The school will report policy enforcement data (as required) to the State Education Department and periodically review the policy.

X. Communication and Training

The policy will be communicated to students, parents, and staff, with training provided for implementation. Feedback will be gathered from the school community for policy development and refinement.