

## STUDENTS

### STUDENTS AND TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES

#### **Purpose Statement:**

We are committed to maintaining a focused and engaging learning environment. To support this goal, students are expected to be free from distractions caused by personal technology devices, including cell phones, earbuds and smartwatches. These devices can disrupt instruction, interfere with classroom focus, and hinder student engagement. For this reason, the use of personal telecommunication devices during instructional time is not permitted. Limited exceptions may be authorized by the building principal using the district procedure (see below under Educational Use).

#### **Definitions**

- A. **Personal Telecommunication Devices** include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, smartwatches, earbuds, tablets, laptops, glasses and any device capable of connecting to the internet, playing audio, electronic communication, recording, or image capture.
- B. **Sexting** means sending, forwarding, displaying, retaining, storing, or posting sexually explicit, lewd, indecent or pornographic photographs, images, or messages by or on a cell phone, computer, or other electronic means during school hours or school activities on or off campus; while on school district property, during any recess, lunch, or leave periods on or off school district property; or beyond the hours of school operation if the behavior detrimentally affects the personal safety or well-being of school-related individuals, the governance, climate, or efficient operation of the school; or the educational process or experience.
- C. **Disrupting the Learning Environment** means any intentional gesture, any intentional electronic communication or any intentional written, verbal or physical act or statement initiated, occurring, transmitted or received by a student at school that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:
  - a. Insulting, mocking, or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school; or
  - b. Creating an intimidating, threatening, hostile or abusive educational environment for a student or group of students through substantially severe, persistent, or pervasive behavior.
- D. **Third parties** include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents or guardians, school visitors, service contractors, or others engaged in district business or activities that are not directly subject to District control at inter-district and intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

#### **Ongoing Training and Education**

The district is committed to providing ongoing training and education for parents and students to ensure understanding of responsible and appropriate cell phone use. Regular opportunities for learning will be offered and communicated to support consistent expectations and promote safe, distraction-free learning environments.

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#### Use Guidelines

*Individual schools may implement stricter guidelines aligned with this procedure and board policy.*

#### Permitted Use Times:

Devices may only be turned on and operated before and after school, during passing periods, and at lunch unless:

- An emergency situation exists that involves imminent physical danger
- The principal or designee authorizes use, or
- The student has a medical or IEP/504 accommodation requiring device use.

#### Educational Use:

Teachers may request limited educational use of devices by submitting a written plan for principal approval using [the district form](#). Approved plans must be made available for periodic school board review.

#### Prohibited Use at All Times:

- A. Cheating, academic dishonesty, or disrupting the learning environment.
- B. Violating privacy rights (e.g., unauthorized recording or sharing).
- C. Sending or possessing sexually explicit content.
- D. Use of devices in restrooms, locker rooms, or any location where privacy is expected.

#### Personal Responsibility:

Students are responsible for their own devices. The district is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged property.

#### Reporting Violations:

Any student, employee, parent or guardian, or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy or any student who feels he/she has been a victim of sexting, menacing, retaliation or reprisal in violation of this policy will immediately report the concerns to:

- A. The building principal or his/her designee;
- B. A teacher who will be responsible for notifying the building principal or designee immediately if the matter cannot be adequately addressed by the teacher, or warrants administrative intervention;
- C. A counselor, who is responsible for notifying the building principal or designee immediately if the matter cannot be addressed by the counselor or is sufficiently serious to warrant administrative intervention; or
- D. The superintendent of schools or designee.

#### Investigating:

The principal or designee will be responsible for timely investigating a complaint made under this policy. The investigation, witness statements, and evidence will be documented along with the outcome of the investigation.

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In the course of the investigation, administrative staff will not send, receive, photograph or unnecessarily view or transmit sexting photographs or any other inappropriate images on either the district's or their personal electronic devices. The examination or viewing of the evidence/information will be limited to the extent necessary to determine that misconduct occurred.

#### **Parent or Guardian Notification:**

Parents or guardians of all students identified in the report will be notified of the investigation and informed of their students' involvement in the incident.

#### **Disciplinary Action**

A school district may administer discipline for students whose behavior violates this policy. Law enforcement may also be notified when conduct may violate criminal laws and the device may be turned over to them.

The district will consider context, student history, and severity in determining disciplinary measures. Discipline actions such as counseling or mediation may be offered when appropriate. Actions will be consistent with school specific student handbooks and district discipline policy.

When a device is confiscated in violation of this policy, it will only be returned to the student's parent or legal guardian.