



École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School

273 Fir Street, Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A 2B9

Phone (780) 467-5631

Email: olph@eics.ab.ca • Web Address: olph.eics.ab.ca

Implementation of Administrative Procedure 145 - Use of Personal Communication Devices - PCDs at École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School

Background & Rationale

Being open to new technologies can help us learn and interact in positive and useful ways. However, when personal devices are used without clear limits, they disrupt learning, invade privacy, compromise academic integrity, and harm relationships and emotional well-being. Our Division [Administrative Procedure 145 — Use of Personal Communication Devices \(PCDs\)](#) sets expectations for personal devices so that their use in schools reflects our Catholic values of respect, responsibility, and care for everyone.

At OLPH, we are dedicated to supporting a community centered on learning, faith, and authentic human connection. Starting in the 2026-2027 school year, OLPH will operate as a "bell-to-bell" phone-free environment. No Personal Communication Devices (PCDs) including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, wireless earbuds, tablets and iPads, or gaming devices will be permitted during the school day, including class time, assemblies, organized events, recesses, and lunch breaks.

By removing digital screens from our shared school day, we create physical and emotional space to truly grow together in Christ.

Why a Phone-Free School Day Supports Student Learning & Development

Restricting personal devices across the entire school day is supported by evidence in cognitive science, developmental psychology, and educational research:

1. Protects Cognitive Bandwidth

- The mere physical presence of a phone even face-down or powered off drains working memory as the brain actively resists checking it (*Ward et al., 2017*). Full-day restrictions eliminate this "brain drain," improving focus, reading comprehension, and academic performance (*Beland & Murphy, 2016; Campbell et al., 2024*).

2. Safeguards Mental Health

- Constant access to social media during school feeds social comparison, "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO), and anxiety (*Haidt, 2024*). A device-free day offers an essential "digital sanctuary," reducing online harassment and classroom disruptions (*Alberta Education, 2024*).

3. Fosters Real-World Connection

- Unstructured breaks like recess and lunch are crucial for practicing non-verbal social cues, resolving conflict, and building true friendships. Removing screens encourages face-to-face dialogue, presence, and authentic community in Christ.
- Real-World Interpersonal Skills: Unstructured times such as lunch and recess are vital for practicing conversation, reading non-verbal social cues, resolving conflict, and building true friendships.
- Present in Fellowship: Removing screens encourages active play and face-to-face dialogue, helping students cultivate patience, empathy, and community.

For the 2026-2027 school year, the following information is important for students and families to be aware of.

Chromebook and Laptop Expectations - ALL Students Grades 5 to 8

As we are a one-to-one district, students are expected to bring their own Chromebooks or laptops for educational purposes. These are to be used in compliance with the [OLPH Student Technology User Agreement](#). Student use of Chromebooks and laptops will be determined by the classroom teacher. These devices are not permitted to be used during recesses or lunch, during which time devices should be stored safely and securely within student lockers or other teacher-designated areas within the classroom.

PCD Expectations - ALL Students Grades 5 to 8

- **No use of PCDs during instructional time, assemblies, organized events, recess, or lunch.**
- PCDs must be stored in the student’s assigned locker all day and is not to be used for communication, internet access, recording, or entertainment.
- In rare and exceptional cases, devices may be used for educational purposes or other school-based activities at the discretion of the classroom teacher and administration.

Communication Between Parents & Students

- **Contacting Home:** If a student needs to reach a parent/guardian during the day, they may request permission to use the main school office phone during break times.
- **Parent Inquiries:** Parents are asked to please contact the main school office directly, and our staff will relay messages to students in a timely manner.

Consequences

- If a device is a distraction or used inappropriately, it will be kept in the office in a safe location for the remainder of the day and the infraction will be logged. The student may pick up the device at the end of the day.
 - **In-class infraction** - staff member will send student with a PCD slip that will be signed at the office; the student will return to class to show that they have turned in their device. The student may pick up the device at the end of the day.
 - **Infractions outside of the classroom** - student will be sent to the office where the PCD slip will be filled out by front office staff. The student may pick up the device at the end of the day.
- Continued non-compliance may result in progressive disciplinary action in the form of a meeting with parents, parent/guardian pick-up of the device, implementation of a learning agreement regarding the device, and/or school-based consequences.

Responsibility

- Devices are brought at students’ own risk.
- The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Resources and Research Related to the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media

[Alberta Education \(2024\). Ministerial Order #014/2024 – Standards for the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools.](#)

[Beland, L.-P., & Murphy, R. \(2016\). Ill Communication: Technology, distraction & student performance. *Labour Economics*, 41, 61–76.](#)

[Campbell, S., et al. \(2024\). Mobile phone restrictions in K–12 schools: A systematic review of academic, behavioral, and socio-emotional outcomes.](#)

[Cellphone use in schools engagement webpage](#)
- [Parent guide: Standards for the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools](#)

[Checklists for Development of School Code of Conduct Research Related to the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media](#)

[Education Act](#)
Government of Alberta. *Education Act & Professional Practice Standards.*

[Guide to Education](#)

[Haidt, J. \(2024\). The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental](#)

Illness. Penguin Press.

[Learning and Technology Policy Framework](#)

[Research Information](#)

[Ward, A. F., et al. \(2017\). "Brain Drain: The Mere Presence of One's Own Smartphone Reduces Available Cognitive Capacity." Journal of the Association for Consumer Research, 2\(2\), 140–154.](#)