The Arts Based School

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Student Personal Cell Phone and Wireless Communication Device Policy

Policy Status: Proposed for Board Approval
Effective Date: To Be Determined
Applies To: All Students, Kindergarten–Grade 8, Both Campuses
Legal Reference: N.C. General Statute § 115C-76.100

I. Purpose

The Arts Based School (ABS) is committed to maintaining a safe, focused, and engaging learning environment that supports students' academic, social, and emotional development.

While personal cell phones and other communication devices can serve useful purposes, their presence during the school day can contribute to distractions, disruptions, unauthorized recordings, inappropriate communication, and concerns regarding student privacy.

To minimize these challenges and encourage meaningful engagement in learning and school activities, ABS establishes a phone-free school day.

II. General Policy

Students are expected to leave personal cell phones and other personal wireless communication devices at home.

Unless specifically authorized under the exceptions outlined below, students may not bring personal cell phones or other personal communication devices onto school property during the school day.

This policy includes, but is not limited to:

- Cell phones and smartphones
- Smartwatches capable of calling, messaging, or other electronic communication

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- Other personal devices capable of wireless communication

School-issued technology used for authorized educational purposes is not prohibited by this policy.

III. Exceptions

ABS recognizes that certain circumstances may require a student to possess or use a personal communication device.

Exceptions will be permitted as required by law, including:

Medical Needs: Students who require a device to manage a documented medical condition, such as diabetes monitoring, will be permitted access to the device as necessary under an approved health care plan.

IEP or Section 504 Accommodations: Students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan requires access to a communication device will be permitted to use the device consistent with their plan.

Educational or Emergency Use: Teachers may authorize device use for specific educational purposes or in an emergency, consistent with school procedures.

Other Extenuating Circumstances: Families may request an exception for unusual circumstances, including significant transportation or family needs. Such requests will be reviewed individually by school administration.

Except when a student's approved needs require immediate possession or access, authorized devices must be checked into the school office upon arrival and retrieved at dismissal.

Exceptions must be approved by school administration, except for teacher-authorized educational or emergency use as permitted by law.

IV. Procedures for Unauthorized Devices

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Students who bring personal cell phones or other prohibited communication devices to school without authorization will be subject to the following procedures:

First Violation

- The device will be collected by school personnel and secured in the school office.
- A parent or guardian will be notified.
- The device will be released to a parent or guardian.

Second Violation

- The device will be collected and secured in the school office.
- A parent or guardian must retrieve the device.
- Administration will meet or communicate with the family to reinforce expectations and address continued violations.

Repeated or Serious Violations

- Additional disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the ABS Student Code of Conduct.
- Inappropriate use involving harassment, bullying, unauthorized recordings, threats, or other misconduct may result in additional consequences regardless of the number of previous violations.

Confiscated devices will be stored securely. ABS will make reasonable efforts to safeguard devices while in its possession.

If a parent or guardian cannot retrieve a confiscated device promptly, administration will establish a reasonable retrieval arrangement.

V. Communication Between Students and Families

ABS recognizes the importance of communication between students and their families.

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Parents and guardians who need to reach their child during the school day should contact the appropriate campus office. School staff will assist with urgent messages and communication needs.

Students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the school day may request assistance from school personnel.

In the event of a school emergency, ABS will communicate with families through established school communication systems.

VI. School Activities and Transportation

This policy applies throughout the regular school day, including classroom instruction, lunch, recess, transitions, and school-sponsored activities occurring during school hours.

Students participating in field trips, school transportation, or school-sponsored activities outside regular school hours must follow any additional device restrictions established by administration.

Exceptions may be considered when necessary for student safety, documented needs, or unusual circumstances.

VII. Implementation and Review

The school administration will establish procedures for communicating and enforcing this policy consistently across both campuses.

Families will receive advance notice of the policy and instructions for requesting exceptions.

The administration will periodically review the effectiveness of the policy and recommend revisions to the Board as necessary.

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. § 115C-76.100, Regulation of Wireless Communication Devices.

Board Adoption Date: _____

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Effective Date: _____