



XXXX: Acceptable Use of Cellular Phones, Smart Watches, and Electronic Devices: Usage in Schools, on School Property or During School Related Activities (A/P)

Approved: 09 04 24
Amended: 24 06 11

BACKGROUND

On January 26, 2024, the Premier of British Columbia and the Ministry of Education and Child Care jointly announced a suite of initiatives focused on keeping students safe, including regulating the use of cell phones in schools, particularly during times of instruction or learning related activity.

The district encourages responsible use of technologies and other forms of electronic communication to support learning, for school district business and communication purposes. While the appropriate use of technology, including cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices for students and staff plays an important role in communication, and may enhance student learning opportunities, in school use of these devices should be consistent with requirements for safety, security, and privacy for students and staff while supporting the purpose of school operations.

Student use of technology, including cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices are at the discretion of the supervising staff, (as specified in s. 1 of the Regulations). It is expected that use of these digital devices will be extremely limited in the elementary years but will increase into the secondary years of study when appropriate. While the use of technology in the instructional setting is regulated, the school district recognizes that some students require technological supports as detailed in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) by classroom teachers, specialist teachers, and administration.

PURPOSE

The intention of these procedures and guiding Policy XXX: Acceptable Use of Cellular Phones, Smart Watches, and Electronic Devices: Usage in Schools, on School Property or During School Related Activities, is to: create space for focused learning and positive interpersonal connection in the classroom with fewer distractions and interruption; support students with learning how to use cell phones, smart watches, and electronic devices responsibly and respectfully; and, help keep students safe from online threats and harmful impacts of social media.

DEFINITIONS

Data – includes, but is not limited to, information contained in student records or employee records, confidential, personal, or professional information and communications, or any other electronically stored information that passes through or is stored electronically on School District technology resources.

District Networks - includes, but is not limited to, access to the School District's wired and wireless network from any location, such as schools, workplaces, home, or other off-site locations; District-provisioned software and applications, including cloud-based resources.



Instructional time – includes not just regular classroom settings, but outdoor learning experiences, assemblies, guest speakers, field trips, and other events organized by supervising staff or administrators.

Personally owned electronic devices – refers to the practice of enabling students to bring personally owned devices such as cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices to school for the sole purpose of educational or instructional use.

REGULATIONS

1. The use of technology, including cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices, within school settings will be restricted during instructional time. It is expected that students will not access or use personally owned devices during instructional time unless permission is granted by the supervising staff, such as for instructional purposes, accessibility accommodations, equity to support learning outcomes, or medical and health needs.
 - i. Students may use personally owned electronic devices during non-instructional times including before class, during breaks, lunch period, and after school.
 - ii. During instructional time, cellular phones and electronic devices should remain in lockers, or in backpacks or purses, and be turned off or in silent mode. Cellular phones should not remain on the student's person and smart watches should not be connected to the cellular phone. **(was s. 5)**
 - iii. Use of cellular phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices during quizzes, tests, exams, and other assessment is prohibited unless students have been given permission for use by the supervising staff member.
2. Online activities related to a school are an extension of the classroom and subject to all school and district expectations. Student online activity and use of electronic devices should be compliant with these procedures and/or district Code of Conduct.
3. Personally owned electronic devices may not be used to take photos/videos of any kind without the permission of the person(s) being photographed or recorded. Cameras/recorders must never be used in areas such as washrooms, changerooms, or private counselling areas in respect to a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
4. Students are responsible for the security and use of any personally owned device. Students are responsible for appropriately securing all devices when not in use, including cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices that are valuable. The security and storage of these items is the sole responsibility of the owner/user. The district or school assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair, or replacement of these items.
5. Students may not use personally owned electronic devices to create, store, view or display inappropriate content while at school, including materials that are sexually explicit, harassing or promote hate, discrimination or violence. Students should report any content or inappropriate electronic behaviour through use of school-related technologies or data sources that is not suitable for the school environment.
6. The School District may take personally owned devices away from students where they are being used in breach of District Policy and/or are disruptive of school activities or classroom learning. In such a case, the device will be stored securely by the supervising staff member and returned to the student at the end of the instructional period. Parents/Guardians will be notified if a personal device is confiscated. Students



who engage in multiple infractions may be subject to further restrictions which may include requiring that personally owned-electronic devices be secured throughout the school day.

7. Pacific Rim School District administrators will investigate if there are reasonable grounds to be believe a student is in breach of these procedures and the conduct is disputed by the student.
8. If a school administrator determines that, for the purposes of investigating any violation of school district policies, it is desirable to view the stored usage data or contents of any student device, students may be asked to provide the device or content for inspection.
 - i. Inspections will take place in the presence of a school administrator, the student and one other witness, which may include a parent.
 - ii. Such inspections will be carried out in the least intrusive manner possible, and stored personal content on student devices will not be viewed except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation.
 - iii. For the purposes of investigating non-compliance with this procedure, the school district may access usage data, content and logs for school district owned devices or wifi networks.

PROCEDURES

1. School guidelines will reference the district policy and administrative procedure and will be posted in the School Codes of Conduct for students, parents/guardians, and staff to review.
 - i. Principals, in consultation with staff and appropriate stakeholders, including PAC's and Rights Holder representatives, will formulate and implement specific guidelines at each site.
 - ii. All parent/guardians and students will provide a signed copy of the Technology Use Agreement Form, acknowledging having reviewed this administrative procedure and corresponding policy together, as part of their initial registration package.
2. For incoming and outgoing communication that require an immediate response, such as emergencies, schools will outline specific guidelines in their annual School Handbook updates for students, parents/guardians, and staff to review.
3. Supervising staff are responsible for the overall management and supervision of student use of technology resources.



RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Policy XXX: Acceptable Use of Cellular Phones, Smart Watches, and Electronic Devices: Usage in Schools, on School Property or During School Related Activities

Policy 510 Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools and attached Appendix 1

Student Technology Use Agreement Form

Legal Advice: Harris & Company LLP

Boundary School District – Regulation No. 3035: Technology – Personally Owned Electronic Devices

Cowichan Valley School District – Administrative Procedure 145 – Use of Personal Digital Devices (PDD)

Gold Trail School District – Operational Procedure 3.250: Cellular Phones, Communication and/or Listening Devices; Usage in or on School Property

Mission Public Schools – DRAFT Use of Technology by Students Policy 3.8

Province of British Columbia News Release (January 29, 2024): [B.C. Launches Concrete Actions to Keep Kids Safe, Healthy.](#)

Qualicum School District – CEAP Secondary Cell-Phone Use Policy

Rocky Mountain School District – District Policy 2700 – Acceptable Use of Digital Technology
- District Practice 2700.2: Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technology