

Personal Electronic Devices and Social Media

Personal electronic devices have become ubiquitous among students and, as technology has advanced, their use and benefit as a classroom tool has grown. Personal electronic devices also serve a safety function for many families. The district recognizes the benefits of students carrying personal electronic devices; however, it also recognizes the need to preserve a classroom and school environment that is safe and learning-centered. Therefore, use of personal electronic devices may be permitted subject to the specifications of Board policy and this administrative regulation, and consistent with any additional school rules as may be established by building administration and approved by the superintendent.

A “personal electronic device (PED)” is a device that is not issued by the district and is capable of electronically communicating, sending, receiving, storing, recording, reproducing and/or displaying information and data.

Possession of such devices must not compromise academic integrity, disrupt the learning environment or violate the privacy rights of others.

Students must not use personal electronic devices to take, disseminate, transfer, share or post still or video images of any student or district employee without the explicit permission of said student or district employee.

Personal electronic devices must be “off and away” during instructional hours, unless explicitly allowed for instructional purposes by a classroom teacher or building administration.

A student may connect their personal electronic device to the district’s public WiFi network. This network is filtered to prevent access to sites deemed inappropriate for minors as per Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) laws; however, because the Web is ever-changing, it is possible for inappropriate content to slip through the district’s filter. In this case, students must immediately notify a district employee of the site and the content.

A student may use district equipment while on district property or during district-sponsored events, or may use their personal electronic device with teacher or building administration approval to communicate directly with district personnel via approved communication methods. Approved communication methods include educational social media forums such as Edmodo or Schoology and district email.

A student who is isolated and involved in a school investigation will not have access to any personal electronic devices while the investigation is in progress. Such devices will be confiscated until the conclusion of the investigation and then released to the student, the student’s parent(s)/ guardian(s) or property owner as appropriate.

Students may not use district equipment, networks or approved personal electronic devices, while on district property or at district-sponsored activities, to access, disseminate, transfer, share or post threatening, hate-related or discriminatory information, images or sites.

The district distinguishes between educational social media sites such as Edmodo, Schoology and Google Earth and personal social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, etc. Students may use district equipment or personal electronic devices as permitted by a teacher or building administration, to access educational social media sites while on district property or at district-sponsored activities. Students may not access personal social media sites using district equipment while on district property or at district-sponsored activities.

The taking, disseminating, transferring, sharing or posting of obscene, pornographic, or otherwise illegal photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (commonly called texting, sexting, emailing, tweeting, etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, or otherwise illegal photographs will be reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies.

Students who are found to be in violation of Board policy or this administrative regulation, or who use a personal electronic device or social media in any manner that is academically dishonest or illegal are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. A referral to law enforcement officials may also be made. Personal electronic devices used in violation of this policy while on district property or at district-sponsored activities are subject to confiscation. Confiscated devices will be released to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or property owner as appropriate.

Students are responsible for any personal electronic devices they bring to school. The district shall not be responsible for loss, theft, damage or destruction of devices brought onto school property even when confiscated. The district will generally not investigate lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed personal electronic devices. The district will not be liable for information or comments posted by students on any social media site when the student is not engaged in district activities and not using district or otherwise approved equipment.

Exceptions to Board policy and this administrative regulation may be made for academic, health, safety or emergency reasons with prior building administration or designee approval or when use is provided for in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

The superintendent shall ensure Board policy and this administrative regulation are available to all staff, students and parents.