

ARTICLE IV. STUDENTS

Section 18. Wireless Communication Devices and Personal Electronic Devices

The Board is committed to providing a focused, safe, and academically rigorous learning environment. Research and classroom experience demonstrate that student use of Wireless Communication Devices (“WCD”) during instructional time disrupts learning, reduces engagement, and negatively impacts academic performance and mental health. The purpose of this policy is to eliminate distractions during instructional time while maintaining appropriate access for safety, health, and educational needs.

The Superintendent is authorized to prepare administrative guidelines necessary to ensure effective implementation of this policy.

Definitions

A “wireless communication device” is defined by law as “an electronic device capable of, but not limited to, text messaging, voice communication, entertainment, navigation, accessing the internet, sending and receiving photos and videos, or producing email. Wireless communications device does not include a basic telephone.”

A “basic telephone” is defined by law as “a device primarily used for voice calling that cannot support third-party applications, except those preinstalled, and does not support access to internet platforms via applications or web browsers.”

“School grounds” is defined by law as “a building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by a school. School grounds does not include a building used primarily for adult education or college extension courses.”

“Instructional time” is defined by this policy as including the following:

- all scheduled class periods;
- study hall;
- intervention blocks;
- home room periods;
- flex time periods;
- assemblies or alternative instructional sessions/periods;
- library instructional periods;
- school-sponsored field trips; and
- any other time designed for academic instruction.

Before and after school, passing periods, assigned recess periods, and assigned lunch periods are designated as non-instructional times.

Students may use WCDs while riding to and from school on a school bus or other Board-provided vehicle at the driver's or chaperone's (i.e., coach or advisor's) discretion. Students are permitted to use WCDs during overnight trips provided that the use of WCDs do not interfere with instruction or the District's educational mission in conducting the overnight trip. School officials overseeing overnight trips maintain discretion in setting reasonable rules during overnight trips.

Uses of Wireless Communication Devices

Subject to the exemptions identified in this policy below, students are prohibited from using a WCD on school grounds during instructional time. WCDs must be turned off or silenced during instructional time and stored out of sight (e.g., in backpack, locker, or designated storage area). Students that use WCDs during non-instructional time must not otherwise create a distraction, disruption, or otherwise interfere with the educational environment.

Parents/guardians who need to contact a student during instructional time may call the school's main office. Students who need to contact a parent/guardian during instructional must receive permission to use a District phone, including classroom phones or the main office phone.

Other Personal Electronic Devices

Other non-District owned personal electronic devices ("PED"), such as computers, tablets (e.g., iPads and similar devices), electronic readers ("e-readers," e.g., Kindles and similar devices), telephone paging devices (e.g., beepers or pagers), and/or other web-enabled devices of any type, are subject to building expectations and protocol, including, but not limited to, the Student Code of Conduct. It is the expectation of the Board that personal electronic devices are not to be used during instructional time and are to be kept powered off and out of sight during instructional time. Students shall not use personal electronic devices during instructional time unless the use is approved by a classroom teacher or administration. Misuse of personal electronic devices may subject students to discipline.

Exemptions

Exemptions to this policy are permitted only under the following circumstances:

- Medically necessary devices for documented medical reasons (e.g., diabetes monitoring)
- District-owned devices that are issued to students for instructional purposes, such as tablets and laptops
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans that include a device as an accommodation as part of the plan and the device is used in accordance with the plan
- Lesson-specific academic assignments as authorized by a classroom teacher for a limited duration and purpose
- District-designated devices that are not owned by the District but designated by the administration for acceptable use and only to the extent authorized
- Emergency situations as defined in the District's Emergency Operations Plan. Students must not interfere with school emergency protocols or the actions of first responders, and must not endanger students or faculty.

Enforcement of Policy

Staff members are authorized to enforce this policy and shall do so consistently and respectfully. Violations of this policy will be enforced in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Penalties may include device confiscation, documented warning, parent/guardian notification, and progressive discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Refusal to surrender a device when directed by staff may result in additional disciplinary action.

Privacy and Liability

The District is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damages personal devices. School officials may investigate violations of this policy as deemed necessary and appropriate. Investigations must be conducted consistent with District policies and applicable law including, but not limited to, Michigan's Internet Privacy Protection Act (IPPA). The IPPA prohibits educational institutions from requesting access to or information allowing access to student personal internet accounts (such as a social media platform) and disciplining or otherwise penalizing students for failing to grant access or information allowing access to those accounts.