

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

Policy 104-G (A)

Acceptable Use of Student Personal Digital Devices

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to all members of the district community to provide a positive climate and a safe, healthy environment.

Developing digital literacy skills is paramount for our students, and integrating technology responsibly can significantly enhance learning. By incorporating technology into learning environments and providing opportunities for its use, we empower learners to develop skills such as productivity, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration.

As students engage with digital devices and platforms, it is essential to balance technological access with considerations of safety, security and privacy. Empowering students to be responsible, informed, and ethical digital citizens will help develop their digital literacy.

Research demonstrates that the presence of personal digital devices may contribute to distractions in learning and can compromise student safety. Clear guidelines on the acceptable use of personal digital devices during instructional time or learning-related activities will strengthen focused learning environments and promote online safety. Students are expected to adhere to the Acceptable Use Guidelines and District Code of Conduct.

Definitions:

Personal Digital Device:

- Refers to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as a cell phone, a tablet, smart watch, gaming device, and electronic toy.

Instructional Time:

- Time that includes scheduled class time, assemblies, guest presenters, field trips and other school-sponsored events.

School Day:

- The period of time from the first bell to the last bell when students are dismissed for the day.

Digital Literacy:

- The interest, attitude and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital technology and communication tools to access, manage, integrate, analyze and evaluate information, construct new knowledge, create and communicate with others.

Digital Citizenship:

- The ability to navigate our digital environments in ways that are safe and responsible and to actively and respectfully engage in these spaces.

Guiding Principle:

Student personal digital devices should not be used during instructional time, unless permission is granted by the supervising staff.

Guidelines:

Use of student personal digital devices for instructional purposes and digital literacy at school, including during hours of instruction:

The use of student personal digital devices should be appropriate to a student's age and stage of development.

- Elementary Schools (Kindergarten to Grade 7)
 - Students should not have personal digital devices in their possession during the school day, unless permission is granted by the supervising staff for educational purposes. This includes during recess and lunch or while outside on the playground or on school property.
 - It is recommended that students do not bring personal digital devices to school. Any personal digital devices brought to school should be powered off and remain in a student's backpack or secured location during the school day.
 - Access to social media platforms on the school wireless network will be restricted on personal digital devices, in compliance with the Terms of Service and age requirements of the social media platforms.
- Secondary School (Grades 8 to 12)
 - Students should not use Personal Digital Devices during instructional time, unless permission is granted by the supervising staff for educational purposes.
 - When not permitted, personal digital devices should be powered off, secured inside a student's backpack, locker or secured location.
 - Personal digital devices are not to be used in areas where privacy is expected or required.
 - Access to social media platforms from personal digital devices may be restricted on the school wireless network during instructional time.

The district does not assume responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair or replacement of any personal digital devices. The security and storage of personal digital devices is the sole responsibility of the student/user.

Accessibility and Accommodation Needs:

Personal digital devices may be used to support students with disabilities or diverse abilities as outlined in a student's support plan or Individual Education Plan.

Medical and Health Needs:

Personal digital devices may be used to support medical necessities.

Equity to Support Learning Outcomes:

Considerations will be made to ensure personal digital device restrictions do not disproportionately impact some students more than others.

Parent Assistance:

The district values the collaborative partnership among students, parents and staff. To maintain a focused learning environment, parents/caregivers are kindly asked not to contact their child on their personal digital devices during the school day. In cases of an emergency, parent(s)/caregiver(s) should contact the school office where staff will facilitate the communication as appropriate.

References:

- BC's Digital Literacy Framework:
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teaching-tools/digital-literacy-framework.pdf>
- Media Smarts - Canada's Centre for Digital Media Literacy:
 - <https://mediasmarts.ca>
- ERASE – Expect Respect and a Safe Education:
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase>