Document Status: Draft Update - New

7:195 Wireless Communication Devices

The District limits the use of wireless communication devices in accordance with State law.[C1] This policy is intended to minimize distractions in the educational environment and support students' learning, behavior, and overall well-being.[C2]

Definitions

Wireless communication device means any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties, including, but not limited to:

1. Cellular telephones;
2. Tablet computers;
3. Laptop computers;
4. Gaming devices; and
5. Wearable devices, including smart watches or smart glasses, ~~unless the capability to provide messaging or transmit other data communications has been disabled~~.[Q1]

Wireless communication device does not include any device that the District or a teacher has directly issued to, provided for, or required a student to possess and use for educational purposes.[C3]

School time means the time students spend on a school campus during the regular school day, beginning with the designated arrival time for students through the designated dismissal time for students, including instructional time,~~ lunch, and passing periods~~.[Q2] School time does not include a before-school or after-school activity or a student's presence at an off-campus learning opportunity.

Device Use

Students are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during school time, except under the following circumstances:[C4]

1. A licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner determines that the possession or use of a wireless communication device is necessary for the management of the student's health care, and the student uses the device only as prescribed by the licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.

2. A wireless communication device is required by a student's individualized education program, Section 504 Plan, the student's health care provider's medical orders, or another written accommodation plan.
3. School personnel have determined that a wireless communication device is necessary for a student who is an English learner, as defined in 105 ILCS 5/14C-2, to access learning materials.
4. School personnel determine, on a case-by-case basis, that a wireless communication device is necessary for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and well-being of a family member.
5. When required by State or federal law.
6. In the event of an emergency, when authorized by the District's emergency crisis and response plans, protocols, or procedures.
7. When school personnel authorize a student to use a wireless communication device for educational purposes. Any such use shall be in accordance with Board policy 6:220, *Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Program; Responsible Use and Conduct*.

Device Storage[C5]

All wireless electronic devices must be powered off or silenced and out of sight during school time. Each Building Principal shall issue guidance to students and staff within their respective school buildings regarding how wireless communication devices must be stored during school time. Storage methods may include, but are not limited to, lockers, backpacks or personal bags, classroom storage solutions, and/or secured pouches/containers.[C6]

Enforcement

Uniform enforcement of this policy at each of the District's schools is important for its effective and fair implementation. Staff shall implement this policy consistently and in a trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate manner.[C7]

Each Building Principal shall establish administrative responses for students who violate this policy, consistent with Board policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*.[C8] Administrative responses may include, but are not limited to, verbal reminders/redirection, student conference, temporary confiscation of the device, parent/guardian notification, restorative intervention, and/or other additional supports.[C9] No student will be suspended, expelled, be required to pay a fee or fine, or be referred to a school resource officer or local law enforcement solely for violating this policy.[C10] If, as a response to violating this policy, a parent/guardian must retrieve the wireless

communication device at a school building, the Building Principal shall provide an alternative for cases in which a parent/guardian is unable to appear in person.[C11]

The Board and District staff are not liable for damage to a wireless communication device if the device is stored in good faith and in accordance with this policy.[C12]

Policy Posting and Distribution

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and published in the student handbook(s).[C13] The Superintendent shall also annually provide this policy to staff, including new employees and substitute teachers when hired, as well as students and their parents/guardians by posting it on the District's website.[C14]

In addition to this policy, the student handbook(s) shall also include the consequences for violations of this policy.[C15]

Policy Review[C16]

At least once every three years, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88 and Board policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, the Board will review and make any necessary and appropriate updates to this policy. In conducting its review, the Board will gather and consider input from the teachers' local collective bargaining agent, administrators, and parents/guardians and consider any available data on the enforcement of this policy. The Board may utilize its Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee to accomplish the policy review.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.88 (final citation pending).

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (School District Philosophy), 2:150 (Committees), 6:220 (Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Program; Responsible Use and Conduct), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

Joliet Township High School District 204

PRESSPlus Comments

C1 Created in response to 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88 (final citation pending), added by P.A. 104-657, requiring a board policy to be adopted by the beginning of the

2027-2028 school year that prohibits student use of *wireless communication devices* during *school time*. However, districts that have existing wireless communication device policies in place before 7-28-26 which limit the use of such devices "during a majority of or the entirety of a school day" are not required to adopt a policy meeting the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88 until the 2031-2032 school year. Consult the board attorney for guidance if the board wishes to rely on an existing policy and delay implementation of a new policy that complies with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88.

Development of this policy must include input from the local collective bargaining agent representing teachers (if any), administrators, and parents/guardians. The law encourages, but does not require, input from students. A board may utilize its existing parent-teacher advisory committee established under 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14 to develop the policy. See sample policy 2:150, *Committees*. The Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) was required to develop a template for a model wireless communication device policy, see the *Model Cell Phone Policy*, available at: www.isbe.net/Documents/Model-Cell-Phone-Policy.pdf. A board's policy does not have to be based on the ISBE model, but this sample policy is consistent with ISBE's model. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C2 This introductory paragraph can be customized based on local needs and conditions. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C3 See sample policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, and sample administrative procedure 6:235-AP1, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, for rules regarding the use of devices that a district issues to students.**Issue 123, October 2026**

C4 Items #1-5 are required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(c), added by P.A. 104-657. Items #6 and #7 are optional and can be deleted. See sample administrative procedure 4:170-AP1, *Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan*, available at PRESS Online by logging in at www.iasb.com, at Section G., **School Emergency Operations and Crisis Response Plan**, and its footnote 5, regarding student use of devices during an emergency. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C5 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(b)(2), added by P.A. 104-657, requires the policy to incorporate guidance for wireless communication storage within a school building during school time, but it does not prescribe the manner of storage for wireless communication devices in schools. This sample policy allows for flexibility at the building level based upon the conditions and needs of a particular school building by delegating the guidance to the building principal. Districts may choose from a variety of storage solutions ranging in cost, from hanging door caddies to magnetized pouches/containers with centralized locking systems. The law does not specifically require devices to be powered off, silenced, or out of sight, but these restrictions are included as a best practice to minimize distractions in the learning environment.

Staff, as used in this sample policy, is intended to include substitute teachers, who also need to be familiar with the guidance on device storage at the buildings where they substitute. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C6 This sentence is optional. It is based on ISBE's *Model Cell Phone Policy*. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C7 Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(b)(3), added by P.A. 104-657. See 105 ILCS 5/3-11 for trauma-related definitions, including *trauma responsive*. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C8 This sample policy authorizes building principals to establish building-level consequences based upon the needs of students in their building. The law does not require inclusion of the administrative responses for violation in board policy, but they must be included in student handbooks(s). For an additional resource on responses for violations, see: https://stand.org/illinois/our-stories/illinois-phone-free-schools-implementation-guide/, at p. 4. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C9 This sentence is optional. It is based on ISBE's *Model Cell Phone Policy*. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C10 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(e), added by P.A. 104-657, and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A. 104-657. The prohibition on these types of disciplinary consequences does not extend to a student's use of a wireless communication device to commit gross disobedience or other misconduct.

The law is unclear regarding whether a school can issue students in-school suspensions solely for violations of this policy. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(e) prohibits "suspensions," but 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 prohibits out-of-school suspensions only. Consult the board attorney for guidance if the district wants to include in-school suspensions as a disciplinary consequence for violating this policy. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C11 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(b)(4), added by P.A. 104-657. This requirement is intended to accommodate those parents/guardians who are unable to physically pick up a device at school due to other commitments, such as working. An alternative could include a call with the parent/guardian to review the policy violation and confirm the device's return to the student or permitting a parent/guardian to designate another adult to pick up the device. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C12 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(g), added by P.A. 104-657. Statutory immunity does not apply if damage to a device is "caused by the willful or wanton conduct of school personnel." **Issue 123, October 2026**

C13 Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(b) and (h), added by P.A. 104-657. The Ill. Principals Association (IPA) maintains a handbook service that coordinates with PRESS material, *Online Model Student Handbook* (MSH), at: www.ilprincipals.org/msh/. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C14 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(h), added by P.A. 104-657, requires a district to annually provide this policy to parents, guardians, and school personnel, including new employees and substitutes teacher when hired. This sample policy manages this requirement through posting on a district's website. Provision of a hyperlink to

the policy also satisfies the posting and annual notice requirements. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C15 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(b), added by P.A. 104-657, requires the student handbook to include the policy *and* administrative responses (consequences) for violations of the policy. **Issue 123, October 2026**

C16 105 ILCS 5/10-20.88(f), added by P.A. 104-657. A board may utilize its existing parent-teacher advisory committee established under 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14 to review this policy. See policy 2:150, *Committees*. **Issue 123, October 2026**

Questions

Q1 A Board may choose to ban wearable devices altogether based on concerns that students may surreptitiously use them to record others at school, to further limit classroom distractions, and/or to address enforceability issues.

Has the Board adopted a ban on wearable devices?

Options

Selection Option

☐ No. (Default)

Selection Option

X Yes. (IASB will delete ", unless the capability to provide messaging or transmit other data communications is disabled" from item #5.)

Q2 A district may permit the use of wireless communication devices during lunch and/or passing periods for high school students. Districts that want to allow the

use of devices during lunch and/or passing periods in high school may choose one of the following options:

Option 1: add ", except that school time shall not include lunch or passing periods." to the end of this sentence.

Option 2: add ", except that school time shall not include lunch." to the end of this sentence.

Option 3: add ", except that school time shall not include passing periods." to the end of this sentence.

Does the Board want to allow the use of devices during lunch and/or passing periods?

Options

Selection Option

☐ No. (Default)

Selection Option

X Yes. The Board allows the use of devices during lunch and passing periods. (IASB will add **Option 1** as shown above.)

Selection Option

☐ Yes. The Board allows the use of devices during lunch. (IASB will add **Option 2** as shown above.)

Selection Option

☐ Yes. The Board allows the use of devices during passing periods. (IASB will add **Option 3** as shown above.)