

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Dave Sandum, Director of Technology

DATE: March 3, 2025

SUBJECT: Second Reading of Policy 524, Internet and Electronic Resources
Acceptable Use and Safety Policy

BACKGROUND:

A review of Policy 524, Internet and Electronic Resources Acceptable Use and Safety Policy has been performed. A first reading was presented to board members at their meeting on February 18. The school district continues to use a modified version of the MSBA model policy in order for it to include up-to-date technology tools (such as cloud-based systems) and cover our localized technology environment in which students are using district devices on and off school property.

In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature enacted a law requiring that school districts adopt a policy on students' possession and use of cell phones.

Section XI has been added to the policy based on the MSBA model policy:

The school board directs the superintendent and school district administration to establish rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of cell phones in schools. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of cell phones on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels, or similar criteria.

Our schools have developed and adopted cell phone rules and procedures for our students. While the School Board doesn't approve administrative procedures, the following summarizes the expectations included in the procedures:

- High School: Students may only use cell phones before school, at lunch, during passing periods, and after school. Cell phones will not be used for instructional purposes.
- Middle Schools: Cell phones and related items must be turned off and put away from 8:45 AM until 3:20 PM. Cell phones may not be used, seen, or heard during the school day.

- Elementary Schools: All electronic devices brought to school are to be silenced and kept in a student's backpack or locker or given to a teacher to store during the school day. Making phone calls, receiving phone calls, sending text messages, or reading text messages during the school day is prohibited.

This policy was also reviewed using the district's 4-Way Equity Test. Policy 524 provides opportunities for students who have historically been underserved, underrepresented, or disadvantaged within the current system in regards to the "digital divide" that can exist among families of different socio-economic backgrounds. Policy 524 ensures a student's ability to use technology and the Internet while at school for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. This aligns with the district's belief that knowledge of how to use technology and the Internet is a life skill that is fundamental in preparation for college and/or a career after graduation.

RESOLUTION:

This is a second reading. No resolution is needed at this time.