



Personal Electronic Communication Devices

February 13, 2025

The Minnesota School Boards Association conducted a statewide survey on the current personal electronic communication devices (PECD) practices employed in member school districts. The survey was open for 10 days the beginning of February 2025. The survey was sent to all 331 member school districts of MSBA. The responding 154 independent school districts (ISD), represents 40% of Minnesota's ISD student enrollment.

	Statewide	Responding
ISD	331	154
Enrollment	796,599	320,418

PECD Practices

ISD's were asked to identify the PECD practices they currently have in place. Please note that varying practices based on student population is the most common response. The second chart below provides a detailed breakdown of this response.

Practice	# of ISD's	
Each building population (elementary, middle school, high school, ...) has a different set of restrictions.	70	45%
PECDs are banned during class time but available the remainder of the day.	50	32%
PECDs are banned bell to bell throughout the school district.	22	14%
Other—PECDs banned with varied exceptions	6	4%
PECDs restrictions are determined by the individual classrooms.	4	3%
Our school district does not have PECD usage practices in force at this time.	2	1%

A breakout of the PECD practices' characteristics for the 70 ISD's above who indicated their practices are based on building populations (elementary, middle school, high school) follows.

Practice	E		MS		HS	
PECDs are banned bell to bell.	65	93%	48	69%	2	3%
PECDs are banned during class time but available the remainder of the day.	4	6%	21	30%	65	93%
PECDs restrictions are determined by the individual classrooms.			1	1%	2	3%
Stated practice does not restrict usage.	1	1%				
PECDs are not allowed during testing.					1	1%

Storage

When asked if they require a centralized storage of student PECDs, only 20 ISDs followed that practice.

Comments

ISDs were asked 4 questions about their selection of the practices they implemented.

- **List the hurdles you had to overcome in the implementation of your PECD practice.**
 1. None: Many ISD's indicated no hurdles in implementation.
 2. Consistency in Enforcement: comments highlighted the challenge of consistent enforcement of policies by teachers and staff. Inconsistencies lead to confusion and power struggles among students and staff.
 3. Parental Involvement and Support: Some parents resist the policies, wanting immediate access to their children, which disrupts the enforcement of rules.
 4. Student Adaptation and Compliance: Students' resistance and attempts to bypass rules are common hurdles.
 5. Communication and Clarity: Clear communication and understanding of the rules help in implementation.
 6. Existing Practices: Schools with pre-existing practices in place face fewer hurdles.
 7. Storage: Some districts are considering a centralized storage approach to assist in enforcement.
- **What are the advantages of implementing your PECD practice.**
 1. Increased Student Engagement: Students are more engaged in class and with each other, with fewer distractions from cell phones. This has led to better attention, more verbal communication, and increased participation in classroom activities.
 2. Positive Feedback from Students and Staff: Students appreciate the reduced distractions, and staff have noticed improved student behavior and engagement.
 3. Improved Social Interactions: Students are interacting more with each other during lunch and passing times, leading to better social skills and reduced incidents of online bullying and negative behavior.
 4. Support from Parents and Community: There is a general support of the practice, recognizing its benefits in reducing distractions and improving student focus and engagement.
- **What are the drawbacks of implementing your PECD practice.**
 1. Inconsistent Enforcement: Continue to address the issue of inconsistent enforcement of PECD practices which leads to frustration.
 2. Parental and Student Resistance: There is notable resistance from some parents and students. Parents feel entitled to communicate with their children during school hours.
 3. Impact on Staff and Resources: The practices require significant time and resources from staff.
 4. Behavioral and Safety Concerns: Covert usage has led to various behavioral and safety concerns.
 5. Minimal Negative Feedback: Despite the challenges, it has went well.
- **What changes do you plan on making to your PECD practice?**
 1. None: Many responses indicate no changes are planned.
 2. Enforcement Consistency: Focus on consistent enforcement of practices which includes training and rewards.
 3. Device Management Strategies: Exploring strategies for storing devices.
 4. Stakeholder Involvement and Feedback: Gather feedback from stakeholders.