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Believe, Belong, Build and Become.

# **Report about 524 Regulation - Implementation of Personal Electronic Devices**

**March 12, 2026**

Dr. Chris Bellmont, Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Jen Hall, Dean of Students Eagle Ridge Middle School

# Plan for Tonight

- Understand the context around personal electronic devices in schools and the policies and procedures that currently apply.
- Understand what data trends might be telling us about personal electronic devices.
- Explore ways our schools are looking to adapt, enhance, and sustain practices to improve the data.

# Context

- 2024 Legislative session
- 524 Policy Development (2024-25)
- 524 Regulation (524R) Development (2025)

**PLAN**

**DO**

**STUDY**

**ACT**

# Features of Policy 524 and 524R

## Elementary

Away for the day, should not be on person.

## High School

Away during instructional time, can be on person and used in passing time and lunchtime.

## Deans

Calibration work with site visits

## Middle

Away for the day, can be on person.

## Leveled Interventions

Leveled Interventions with parent communication.

## Allowances

Allowances for use in emergency situations.

# What is the data telling us? - Teaching Staff

## Survey Responses & Key Findings 2025-2026



### Survey Respondents

176 (Fall), 221 (Winter)



### Increased Attention

Fall: 80.1%  
Winter: 82.1%

Agree/Strongly agree more attention is being paid to personal electronic devices in 25-26.



### Consistency Clarity

Success depends on staff communication and consistent application.



### Enforcement Burden

Some teachers feel like unsupported 'phone police.'

# Quotes from Teaching Staff

**“Personal electronic device usage is difficult to police in Virtual Academy.”**

*- Virtual Academy Teacher*

**“ERMS has done electronics away for the day for many years now. It is a game changer in classes as long as every teacher is consistent with it.”**

*- Eagle Ridge Middle School Teacher*

**“I would like posters for the classroom to remind students about the need to put away their devices.”**

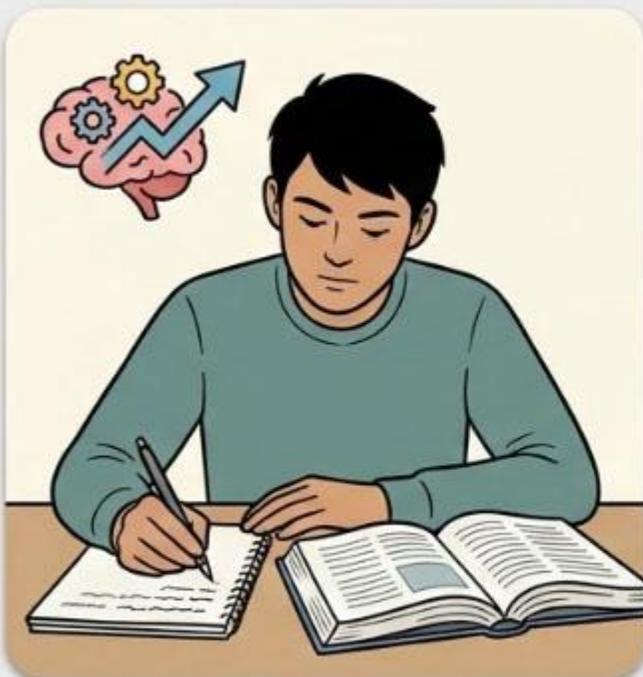
*- Burnsville High School Teacher*

**“I’m hoping we can stay consistent with our personal electronics policy.”**

*- Nicollet Middle School Teacher*

# What is the data telling us? - Students

## Academic Impact



Improved attention and concentration.

## Strictness & Circumvention



Rules felt more strict; some find ways around them.

## Social Dynamics



More in-class interaction, but a significantly quieter cafeteria.

# Quotes from Students

**"I feel like I'm paying attention more in class bc of the new rules."**

*- Eagle Ridge Middle School Student*

**"I learn better when I listen to music."**

*- Burnsville High School Student*

**"Healthy relationships with peers. I believe we need to be able to have our phones at certain times during the day."**

*- Nicollet Middle School Student*

**"I use it [my phone] for schoolwork."**

*- Burnsville Alternative High School Student*

# What is the data telling us? - Parents

Focus groups at all five schools revealed several themes:

- **Priorities:** Parents' main concern is the ability to have emergency contact with their child.
- **Support for learning:** Most parents value reduced distraction and have noticed academic improvement.
- **Consistency:** Parents prioritize fair policy application over policy itself.



# Quotes from Parents

**“What if there’s an emergency?”**

*- Burnsville Alternative High School Parent*

**“I think the policy is fine, our daughter just needs it so that she can contact us if needed.”**

*- Eagle Ridge Middle School Parent*

**“[The policy] prevents issues; less distractions”**

*- Nicollet Middle School Parent*

**“The phone causes a major struggle in our family almost daily.”**

*- Burnsville High School Parent*

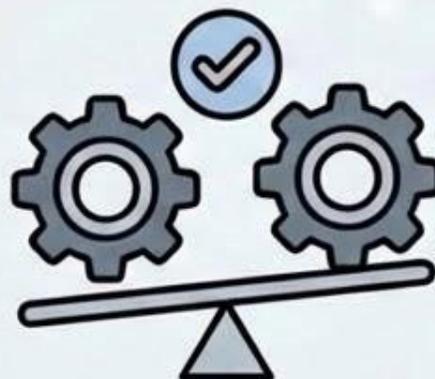
# What is the data telling us? - Principals

Principals' feedback included:



## Enforcement challenges

Behaviors are sometimes escalated to administration faster than what is outlined in the handbook guidance



## Consistency

Consistent staff implementation is crucial.



## Tools and Resources

Routine, consistent use of tools (e.g., wall pockets) have produced positive results.

# Quotes from Principals

**“Staff consistency is the critical factor for success; without it, the policy loses credibility.”**

*- Burnsville Alternative High School Principal*

**“There is a need for strong systems to be in place and for all our staff to be engaged around it.”**

*- Burnsville High School Principal*

**“[The policy] helps limit the distraction from learning.”**

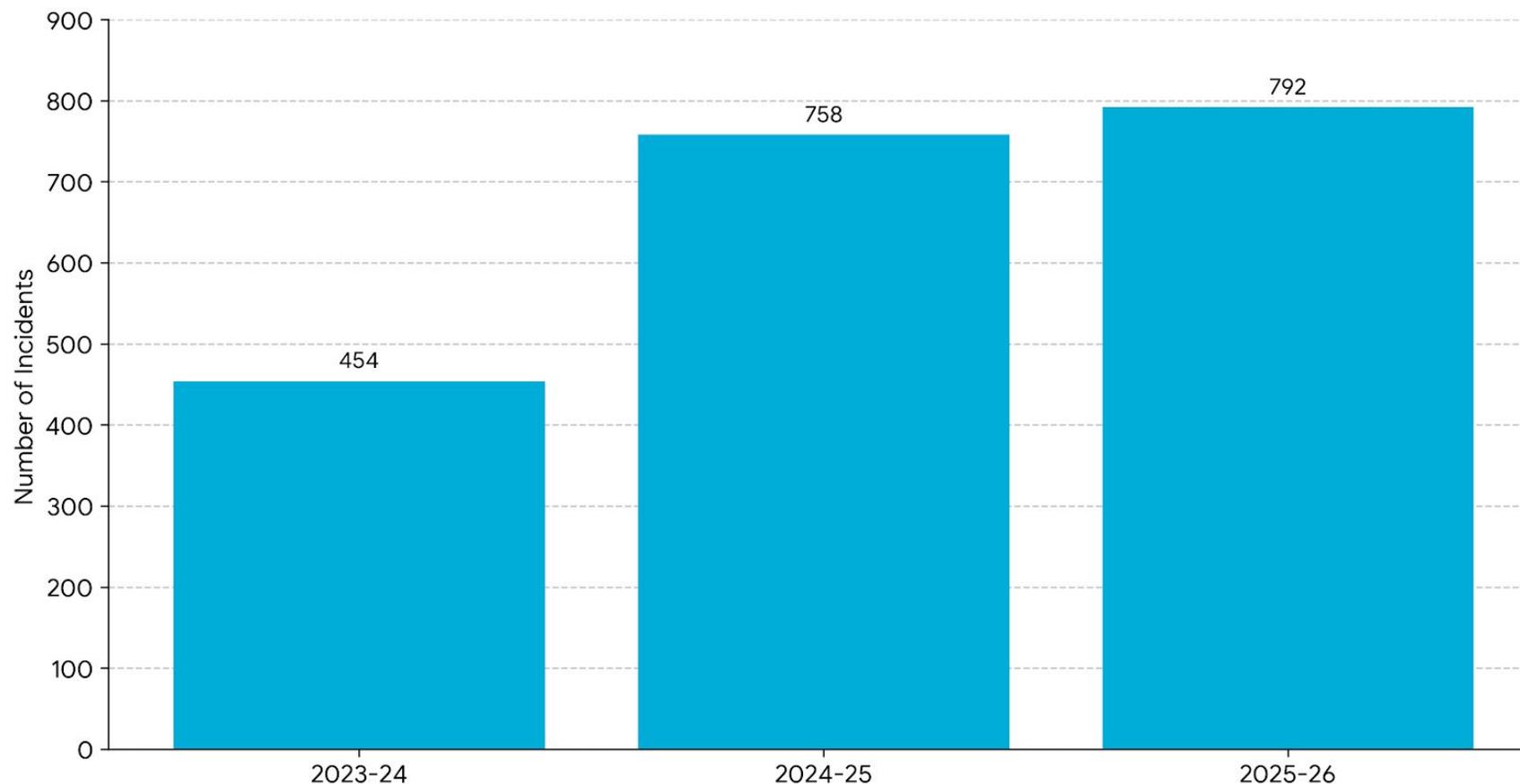
*- Eagle Ridge Middle School Principal*

**“Students and families overall note an increased focus on cell phones this year.”**

*- Nicollet Middle School Principal*

# What is the data telling us? - Behavior

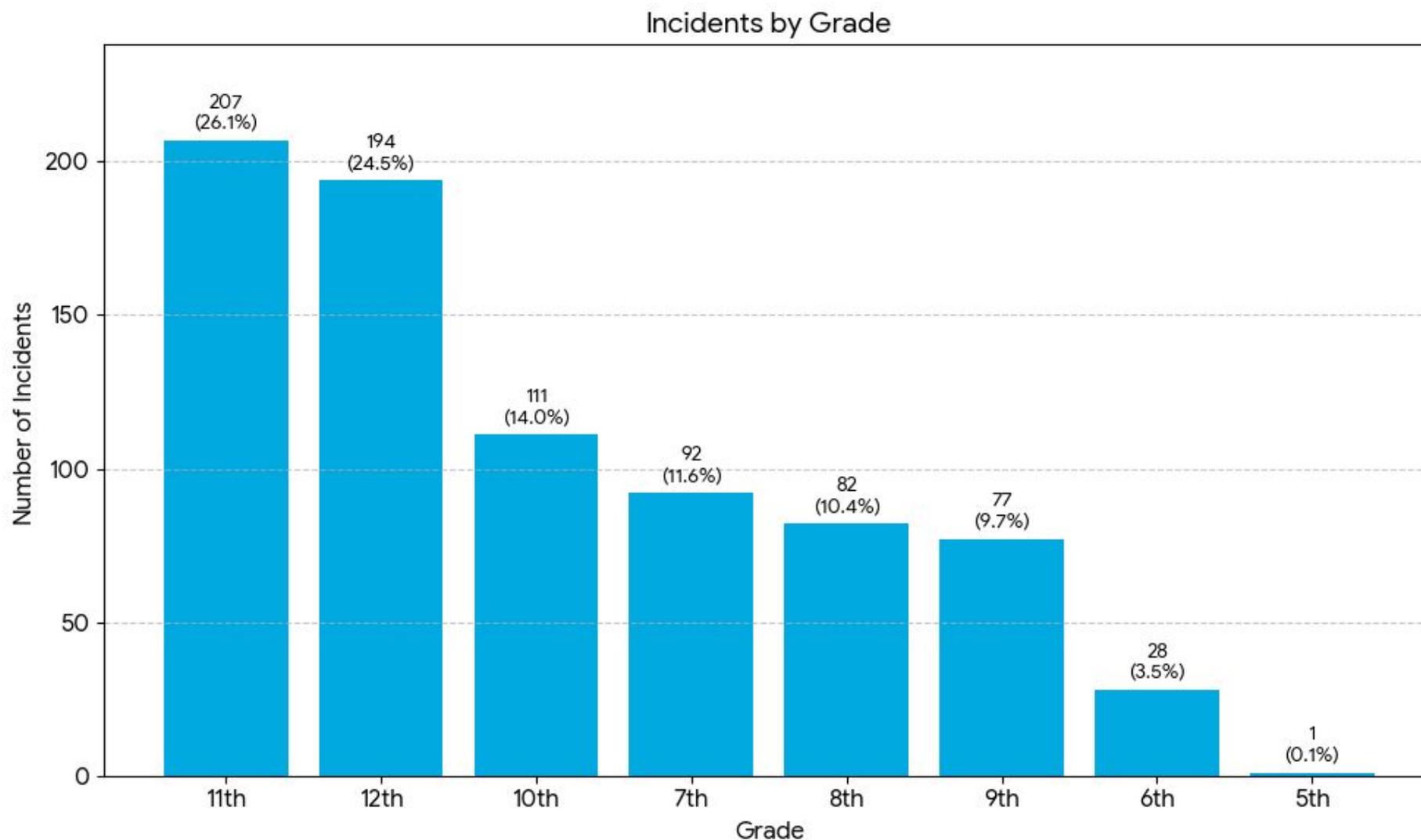
Documented Incidents of Level 2+ (through March 1, 2026)



2023-Present

\*\* Note - our student handbook and data system recording changed in 2024-25 school year and were enhanced 2025-26.

# What is the data telling us? - Behavior

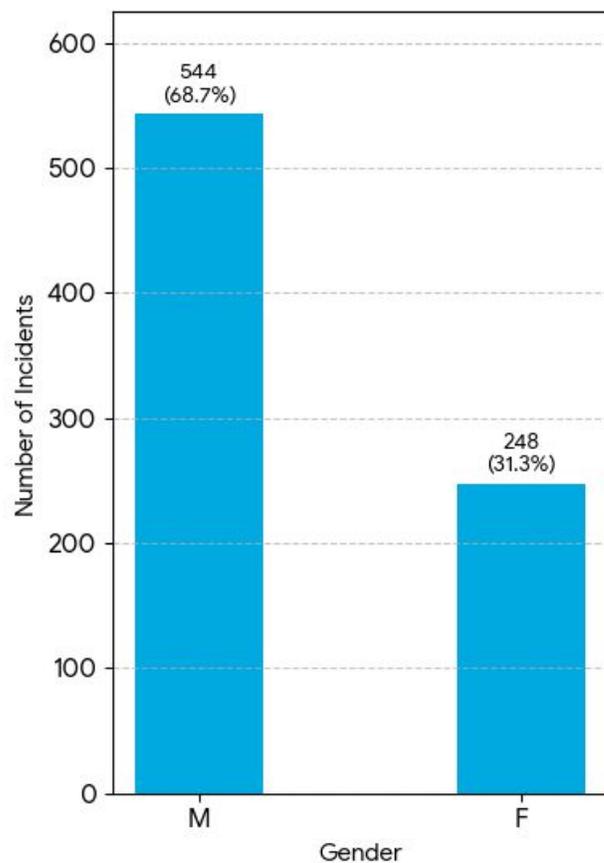


2025-2026  
School  
Year

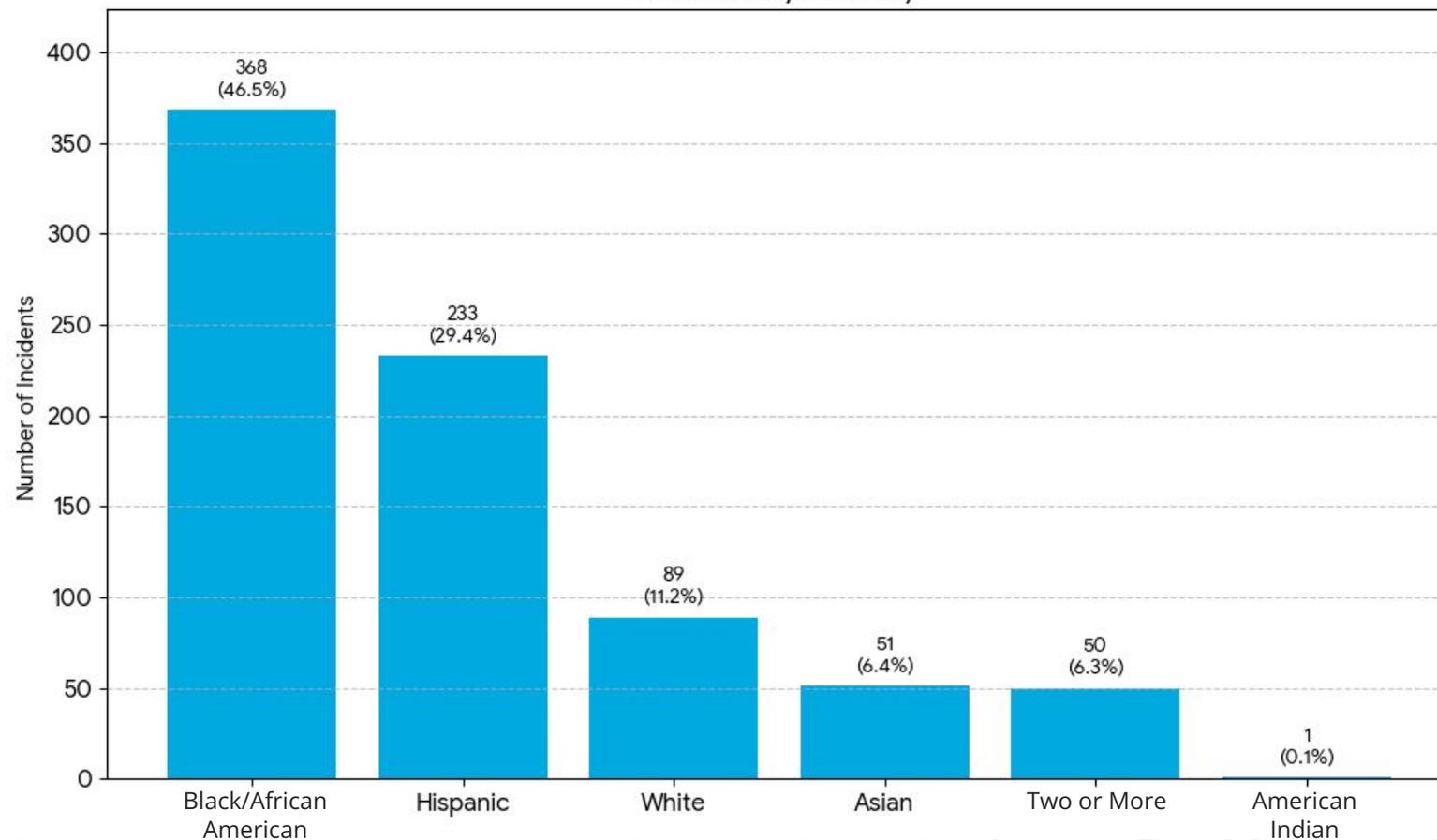
# What is the data telling us?

2025-2026 School Year

Incidents by Gender



Incidents by Ethnicity



# Voices from the schools



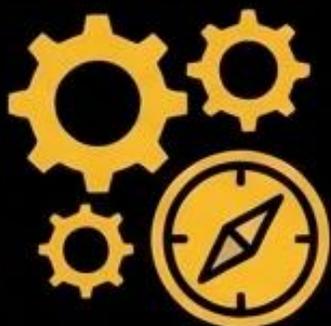
# Next Steps

In response to the data, we will:

- ❑ Review and improve the student handbook (spring to June).
- ❑ Align high-impact practices across sites.
- ❑ Conduct fidelity checks and tracking with BLTs.
- ❑ Continue calibration work with Deans.
- ❑ Proactively and routinely teach expectations, especially at the high school level.
- ❑ Continue to monitor changes to Minnesota Legislation.

# Thank you!

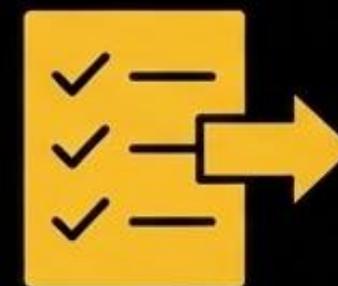
**Context**



**Next Steps**



**Data Trends**



*Parts of this slideshow created with support from Gemini*