

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

MSBA/MASA Model Policy  
524.5

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Orig. 2025

## **524.5 PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The objective of this policy is to support the school district's focus on learning in alignment with the district's mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools. Possession and use of personal electronic communication devices must be regulated to ensure that such devices do not disrupt or interfere with the education process or school operations, impair the safety, welfare, and privacy of students and staff, or are used as part of an act of academic dishonesty.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

To minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment and to support school environments in which students can engage fully with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the school board has determined the use of personal electronic communication devices by students during school hours should be limited.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. "Bell-to-Bell" means from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day to begin instructional time until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day. "Bell-to bell" includes lunch and time in between class periods.
- B. "Cell Phone" means a personal device capable of making calls, transmitting pictures or video, or sending or receiving messages through electronic means. The definition of cell phone includes a non-smart phone that is limited to making phone calls or text messages and a smart phone that encompasses the above features.
- C. "Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.
- D. "Instructional Time" means any structured or unstructured learning experiences that occur from when the first bell rings at the start of the school day until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day.
- E. "Personal Electronic Communication Device" means any personal device capable of connecting to a cell phone, the internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly connects to another similar device. Personal electronic communication devices may include cell phones, wearable devices such as smart watches, personal headphones, earbuds or pods, laptops, tablets, virtual reality devices, and other personal electronic communication devices with the abovementioned characteristics.
- F. "Stored" means a cell phone or personal electronic communication device not being carried on the student's person, including not in the student's pocket. Storage options may include, but are not limited to, in the student's backpack, in the student's locker, in a locked pouch, or in a designated place in the classroom, as determined by school administration.

#### **IV. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE USE AND STORAGE**

##### **A. Personal Electronic Communication Device Use**

###### **1. Elementary Schools (K-5)**

- a. Personal electronic devices are not allowed during the school day. Examples could include, but are not limited to the following: headphones, iPods, MP3 players, DS, video games, cell phones, Gizmos, Apple Watches (or the like) etc. These items will not be allowed for use during the hours of 8:10 AM to 3:05 PM. Students are allowed to have these items in their lockers during the day; however, misplaced/stolen valuables are not the responsibility of the school. If a student needs to use their cell phone for an emergency, please go to the office to get permission to use it.
- b. Students are prohibited from recording video or taking pictures of other students or staff using cell phones or other recording devices on school property, in school vehicles, and at school related functions.

###### **2. Middle School and High School (7-12)**

- a. Students will be able to use cell phones (texting only) between classes and during lunch. Once a student enters the classroom, their phone must be put away the entire class period unless directed by the teacher to use it for an assignment (i.e. creating a video assignment). Students should have their cell phones on silent or vibrate from 8:00 AM to 3:12 PM. Students will need permission from a staff member to talk on their phone during the school day. If students need to talk on their phone, they should do so in the office or outside of the building.
- b. Students are prohibited from recording video or taking pictures of other students or staff using cell phones or other recording devices on school property, in school vehicles, and at school related functions.
- c. Students may wear smart or electronic watches but may not use any communication applications or features that are prohibited from use on other personal electronic communication devices and all notifications must be turned off.

##### **B. Off-Campus School-Sponsored Activities**

Students are prohibited from recording video or taking pictures of other students or staff using cell phones or other recording devices on school property, in school vehicles, and at school related functions. This includes school activities and events at other facilities. Examples include the school bus, locker rooms, and field trips. Possible student consequences include detention, loss of bus riding privileges, or other consequences deemed necessary by the high school principal. Students who are recording for school events would be exempt with proper permission.

**V. LIMITATIONS ON USE OF AND STORAGE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

A. Limitations on Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

1. Personal electronic communication devices may not be used in any manner that causes or results in disruption of the educational environment or school-sponsored extracurricular activities or events or impairs or interferes with school district operations.
2. Devices, including but not limited to personal electronic communication devices, with audio, video, or photo-taking capabilities shall not be used at any time in locker rooms, bathrooms, or other locations where the presence of such devices poses an unreasonable risk to the safety, welfare, or privacy of others. Confiscation and search of such devices will occur if found in these areas.
3. Students may not use a device to record, transmit, or post audio, videos, or photos of a person or persons on school grounds or on a school bus without the express permission of school staff in addition to the express consent of the individual or individuals that are the subjects of the recording.
4. Personal electronic communication devices may not be used to engage in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, or other activity prohibited under federal or state law or under school district policy.
5. Personal electronic communication devices shall not be used during a lockdown drill, a fire drill, or a similar safety drill.

B. Storage of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

Students shall keep their personal electronic communication devices in a secure place, such as the student's locker, a closed backpack, a storage device provided by the school, or an area designated by the classroom teacher at all times when personal electronic communication device use is prohibited.

**V. EXCEPTIONS**

- A. Nothing in this policy prohibits a student from using a personal electronic communication device for a purpose documented in the student's individualized education program, a plan developed under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or a health care plan in force regarding the student.
- B. A student may use a personal electronic communication device to monitor or address a health concern or medical condition upon permission granted by school administration.
- C. Students may use a personal electronic communication device when the use is necessary to respond to or report an emergency. For purposes of this policy, "emergency" means an actual or imminent threat to the health or safety of students and/or school personnel, which may result in death, bodily injury, or substantial property damage.
- D. A student may use a personal electronic communication device during a time at which use would otherwise be prohibited when the student has been granted permission from a staff member to use the device. If the school district implements a curriculum that uses technology, students may be allowed to use their own personal electronic communication devices to access the curriculum. Students who are allowed to use their own devices to access the curriculum will be granted access to any application or electronic materials when they are available to students who do not use their own

devices, or provided free of charge to students who do not use their own devices for curriculum.

- E. A personal electronic communication device may be stored in student vehicles parked on school district property provided that the device is not removed from the vehicle while on school district property.
- F. Students who need to make a call may request permission to use a telephone in the building office.

## **VI. CONSEQUENCES**

### **A. Consequences for violation of this policy**

#### **1. Elementary Schools (K-5)**

- a. Warning: phone stays in the office for the remainder of the day
- b. Warning: phone stays in the office and has to be picked up by adult
- c. Consequences determined by the principal - we have done a daily checkin/out typically
- d. 2024-25 Handbook

#### **2. Middle School and High School (7-12)**

- a. Warning: phone will stay in the office for the remainder of the day
- b. 3 days check phone into office or 30 minute detention
- c. 6 days check phone into office or 60 Minute Detention
- d. Consequences determined by the Principal.

## **VII. SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The school district is not responsible for, nor is it required to investigate, any lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic communication devices brought onto school grounds or the bus or school-sponsored activities or events.
- B. The school board directs the superintendent and school district administration to establish additional rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of personal electronic communication devices in schools as the superintendent and school district administration find appropriate. These rules shall be consistent with this policy and other applicable school district policies. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of personal electronic communication devices on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels, or pursuant to similar criteria.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)  
Minn. Stat. § 13.32 (Educational Data)  
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)  
Minn. Stat. § 121A.73 (School Cell Phone Policy)

Minn. Stat. § 124D.166 (Limit on Screen Time for Children in Preschool and Kindergarten)  
Minn. Stat. § 125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)  
Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)  
29 U.S.C. § 794 (Nondiscrimination under Federal Grants and Programs)

***Cross References:***

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)  
Away for the Day ([www.awayfortheday.org](http://www.awayfortheday.org))  
MASSP/MESPA, *The Cell Phone Toolkit* (July 2024)