

****RECOMMENDED NEW POLICY****

597 STUDENT USE OF CELLULAR PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for student use of cell phones and personal electronic devices in order to maintain a safe, respectful, and academically focused learning environment.

II. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The school district recognizes that personal electronic devices can support communication and learning; however, their use during the school day must be regulated to minimize disruption to instruction and protect the educational environment.

Student possession and use of cell phones is a privilege, not a right, and may be limited or revoked in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

III. DEFINITIONS

“Cell Phone / Personal Electronic Device” is any privately owned device capable of communication, internet access, or media recording (e.g., smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds with connectivity).

IV. STUDENT USE EXPECTATIONS

A. Grades PreK-6

- Cell phones are prohibited in classrooms, hallways, and the lunchroom during the school day.
- Students are not allowed to possess or use personal electronic devices from 8AM-3PM.

B. Grades 7-8

- Cell phones are prohibited in classrooms, hallways, and the lunchroom during the school day.

- Students may briefly check devices in locker bays during passing time only.
- Devices must be stored in student lockers during the school day.

C. Grades 9-12

- Cell phones are prohibited in classrooms during instructional time, unless authorized by staff for instructional purposes.

V. EXCEPTIONS

1. Medical Necessity

- Use allowed for documented medical purposes with prior approval.
- Must be limited and non-disruptive.

2. IEP / 504 Plans

- Use permitted when explicitly required as an accommodation.

3. Emergencies

- Use allowed during verified emergencies or when directed by staff.
- Staff direction overrides all other provisions.

VI. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Students shall not:

- Use devices in a manner that disrupts instruction
- Record or share content without consent where privacy is expected
- Engage in cheating, bullying, harassment, or misconduct
- Violate district technology or conduct policies

VII. CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

The District will use a progressive discipline approach, while reserving the right to accelerate consequences based on severity, repeated violations, or refusal to comply.

Level 1: First Violation

- Verbal warning and re-teaching of expectations
- Student directed to put device away or return it to locker
- Teacher-managed intervention

Level 2: Second Violation

- Device confiscated by staff and held until the end of the school day
- Documentation in student record
- Parent/guardian notification may occur

Level 3: Third Violation

- Device confiscated and released only to parent/guardian
- Office referral issued
- Possible detention or assigned consequence

Level 4: Repeated or Chronic Violations

- Loss of privilege to bring a device to school for a defined period
- Required check-in/check-out system through the office
- Parent/guardian conference
- Additional disciplinary action consistent with Student Code of Conduct

Level 5: Severe Misuse

(Examples: recording fights, harassment, academic dishonesty, refusal to comply)

- Immediate office referral
- Confiscation of device
- Parent/guardian contact required
- Consequences may include:
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Additional consequences aligned with Minnesota Statute § 121A

VIII. ADDITIONAL ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

- Refusal to surrender a device when requested by staff may result in escalated disciplinary action.
- The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.
- Administrators retain discretion to modify consequences based on individual circumstances.

IX. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUITY

Enforcement of this policy will be fair, consistent, and non-discriminatory in accordance with Minnesota law.

X. ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to develop procedures for implementation.

XI. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER DISTRICT POLICIES

Use of cellular phones or other personal electronic devices must not violate any other District policies, including those regarding student privacy, copyright, cheating, plagiarism, civility, student code of conduct, electronic technologies acceptable use, or harassment. If a violation occurs involving more than one District policy, consequences for each policy may apply.

XII. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

This policy shall be included in the Student/Parent Handbook, posted on the District website and otherwise distributed upon request.

Legal References: Minnesota Statutes § 121A (Student Discipline)
Minnesota Statutes § 13 (Student Data Privacy)
IDEA and Section 504