

Policy

CELLULAR TELEPHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices are defined to include portable two-way telecommunication devices, including but not limited to cellular telephones, smart phones, iPads, smart watches, personal digital assistants, and other hand-held computing devices (when such device is being used as a communication device). This definition will also include any new technology developed for similar purposes and all technology capable of accessing the Internet. Excluded from this definition is any device with communication capabilities that has been approved for instructional purposes and remotely activated paging devices ("beepers").

Students

Students in grades K-2 may not use cell phones on the school property unless specific approval has been granted by the teacher and/or the principal.

Students in grades 3-8 shall not display, use, activate, or permit cell phones to be activated in any school building during the instructional day, without the expressed permission of the teacher and/or the principal or his/her designee. Individual classroom arrangements may be made by teaching staff with the principal for the use of personal communication devices as part of the instructional program.

The instructional day includes, but is not limited to, lunch break, class changes, and any other structured or non-structured instructional activity that occurs during the normal school day. Students are responsible to ensure that their cell phones are turned off and out of sight.

Because of the threat to privacy and the integrity of the educational program, the use of a camera function of a cell phone and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited on school premises or at school activities. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices is prohibited in restrooms, locker rooms and shower facilities.

Permitted Use by Students

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be used before the instructional school day (before homeroom) and after the official dismissal at the end of the instructional school day provided such use does not create a distraction or disruption.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used by students participating in before-school or after-school activities unless approved by the staff member in charge.

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used on the school bus or commercial buses used for field trips or other school activities unless approved by the staff member in charge.

Staff

The board recognizes a school teaching staff member may need to make a personal call or message during their workday when the telephone call cannot be made before the staff member reports to work and/or after the staff member's workday has concluded.

In the event the staff member has an emergency and must make a personal call or send a message during their workday, the school staff member may call or message using their personal cellular telephone during the staff member's duty free lunch or break periods. Personal use of electron devices shall only be permitted outside the presence of pupils either in an area inside or outside the school building designated by the staff member's building principal or immediate supervisor.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (continued)

Personal telephone calls, checking on sending messages shall not be permitted while the staff member is performing assigned school district responsibilities.

In the event the staff member has an emergency requiring immediate attention that requires the personal use of their electronic device, the teaching staff member shall inform their building principal or immediate supervisor before or immediately after using the cellular telephone, depending on the nature of the emergency.

Policy Implementation

Any staff member having knowledge or reasonable suspicion of the unauthorized possession or use of an electronic device/cell phone/pager ("beeper") by a student should promptly report this information to the principal or his/her designee.

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to, parental/guardian notification, confiscation and privilege denial.

Emergency Use

Cell phone and other electronic communication devices may be used at any time in the event of an emergency. An emergency is defined as any event in which there is imminent danger of bodily injury or loss of life or damage to property.

Adopted: November 25, 2011
 NJSBA Review/Update: September 2016
 Readopted: January 24, 2017

Key Words

Cell Phones, Text Messaging, E-Mail

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 18A:6-10 Dismissal and reduction in compensation of persons under tenure in public school system
N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4 Power of boards of education to make rules governing employment of teacher, etc.
N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 Powers of board (county vocational schools)

Possible

Cross References: 4117.50/4217.50 Standards for staff discipline
 4119.2/4219.2 Responsibilities
 *4119.21/4219.21 Conflict of interest
 *4119.22/4219.22 Conduct and dress
 *4119.23/4219.23 Employee substance abuse
 *4138/4238 Nonschool employment
 *4138.2 Private tutoring

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.