

Student Owned Electronic Communication Devices

Although the Snake River School District #52 recognizes the importance of technology in the educational setting, electronic communication devices, like cell phones, pose a significant distraction to the learning environment and can create considerable concerns. A growing body of evidence suggests that student access to cell phones and other electronic communication devices is detrimental to students' emotional well-being, safety, and academic growth.

The Board's Priority is that all students are engaged in learning without distraction. Student use of electronic communication devices during school hours in school buildings and on school grounds should be as limited as possible. To support the District's mission of providing a quality education necessary for students to be successful in life, the use of personal electronic communication devices at school is prohibited during the school day, unless otherwise noted in this policy. This policy will be strictly and fairly enforced by all district personnel.

Definitions

Device: All personal electronic communication devices including but not limited to the following personal devices and accessories used for communication and entertainment: cellphones, smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, video recording devices, personal digital assistants (PDA), iPods, iPads, laptop computers, tablet computers, other wearable electronics, and other similar electronic devices. This does not include district-issued devices or devices approved by the administration for educational use or devices needed to support students with disabilities or health monitoring when being used for those specific purposes.

School Day: From the official start time, which will be defined at the building level, to the end of the day at school dismissal, including class periods, passing periods, free periods, lunch periods, recess, and assemblies. For activities that take place off-campus when students are normally in school, such as field trips, trip-specific personal electronic device regulations will be established by the trip facilitator.

Prohibition of Devices

Students must keep their devices completely silenced (not making notifications, alerts, or vibrations), out of sight, and not on their person (e.g. in their pocket) while on school campuses or at school activities for the duration of the school day. The only exception is that high school students may use their devices during their lunch periods at school. Students may keep devices in a backpack, bag, locker, etc. but the device must not be seen or heard. This prohibition does not extend to district-issued devices in educational settings. Students may use district-issued devices (e.g. Chromebooks) or pre-approved personal devices, such as laptops or headphones, for education purposes during the school day. Any pre-approved personal device must use the school's filtered internet service.

By placing limits on the permissible use of such electronic devices, the Board intends to:

1. Adopt policy in alignment with State Department of Education guidance on cell phones;
2. Promote student safety;
3. Support staff in maintaining an environment that encourages learning;
4. Increase student conversation in person by reducing electronic communication and improving student in person social skills.
5. Reduce distractions in the learning environment;
6. Improve academic focus;
7. Promote responsible technology use;
8. Prevent cyberbullying;
9. Mitigate the privacy concerns posed by personal electronic devices; and
10. Limit electronic device usage during testing to protect the integrity of assessment items and results.

This policy shall apply to any electronic device not issued by the District that is capable of accessing the internet or sending an electronic message to another device.

Restrictions on Time and Location of Use

Students are prohibited from using cell phones in the following times and places:

1. During class time;
2. During passing periods (except for the high school)
3. During lunch; (except for the high school)
4. In bathrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms; and
5. While attending field trips during school hours.

Students are permitted to use cell phones in the following times and places:

1. Before and after the school day;
2. At school activities outside of school hours;
3. In class when specifically allowed by the teacher for an educational class activity.

Exceptions

Any use of an electronic device required by a student's 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall be permitted regardless of whether it would otherwise violate this policy.

Students may use a personal electronic device in the case of an emergency to contact help. In this policy, an emergency is an event that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of any person or a risk of damage to property. If a student needs to use a personal electronic device in such an emergency, they should ensure they are in as safe a location as is feasible.

If a student's parent/guardian or their designee needs to contact a student in the case of an emergency at a time when student cell phone use is not permitted, the parent/guardian or designee should call the school office and ask staff to relay the message.

The Student handbook and teacher instruction may be used to inform students about the safe use of smart devices during an emergency.

Containment of Devices

When use of personal electronic devices is not permitted, such devices must be stored in:

1. The student's locker or cubby;
2. The student's bag, purse, coat pocket and out of sight;
3. A location in the classroom designated by the teacher;
4. A location in the school designated by the principal;
5. A secure bag or other receptacle provided to the student by the teacher.

The Superintendent may set further procedures and schools may set additional rules to ensure this policy is followed. The District may also make use of technology-based approaches, such as monitoring or blocking internet access.

Students are responsible for safeguarding devices they bring to school. The District shall not be responsible for loss, theft, damages, or destruction of student owned devices brought onto school property.

Use of Devices

Any use of personal electronic devices at school or at school events shall comply with Procedure 3270P Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks. Student-owned electronic devices shall not be used in a manner that disrupts the educational process, including, but not limited to, posing a threat to academic integrity or violating confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual.

Access to the devices is a privilege and not a right. Each student will be required to follow the Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy and the Internet Access Conduct Agreement.

Students may only access the internet through the filtered District connection, regardless of whether they are using their personal device or a District-issued device. District staff will not provide software or technical assistance for student-owned devices.

Because power cords stretched out in classrooms become a safety issue both for the students and devices, charging the device with such a cord in any classroom, hallway, or any other location that may be a safety concern may be prohibited.

The use of cameras in any type of electronic device is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms, and classrooms unless a certified District employee authorizes the student to do otherwise. Where students are allowed to use electronic devices, they are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph or video of any individual. Students must also obtain permission from any individual appearing in a photograph or video prior to posting on any social networking site or other internet site.

Students found to be using any electronic communications device to in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on any student assessment, project, or assignment shall be subject to discipline.

Students shall comply with any additional rules developed by the school and classroom teacher concerning appropriate use of personal electronic devices.

Disciplinary Action

Students violating the provisions of this policy are subject to disciplinary action. 1st Offense -students device will be confiscated by a District employee and may be retrieved from the school's front office at the end of the school day. For any following violations, the student's parent/guardian may pick up the device from the front office. Repeat offenders may lose the privilege of bringing the device onto school property.

Violation of this policy may also result in suspension or expulsion, as described in Policy 3340 Corrective Actions and Punishment, if appropriate. If a student or a parent/guardian wishes to appeal such disciplinary action, they can do so by submitting a written request for appeal to the building principal within four (4) school days. If the decision being appealed was made by the building principal, the appeal may instead be made to the Superintendent.

Implementation & Review of Policy

The Board directs the Superintendent or their designee to inform staff, students, and parents/guardians about this policy and how it will be implemented. The District shall make this policy publicly available on its website and shall include a link to this policy in a prominent location on the website. The Board also directs the Superintendent or their designee to develop practices that reinforce the importance of and ways of addressing:

1. Digital literacy lessons;
2. The effects of cyberbullying;
3. Privacy concerns; and
4. Online disinformation.

The Superintendent shall report to the Board each year about the effectiveness of this policy and shall recommend changes to it as needed.

Legal References

Executive Order 2024-11

IC § 33-1025

IC § 33-132

IC § 33-6801

IC § 33-6802

Policy Checklist for LEAs

Description

Phone Free Learning Act

Wireless Technology Standards

Local School Boards — Internet Use Policy
Required
Definitions

Distraction-Free Learning

by the Idaho Department of Education

Code

3270

3270

Description

District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and
Networks

District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and
Networks

3270	District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks
3340	Corrective Actions and Punishment
3340	Corrective Actions and Punishment

Policy History:

Adopted on: 02/20/2024

Revised on: 08/20/2025

Reviewed on: 12/18/2024; 07/23/2025; 08/20/2025