

Administrative Procedures for Student Use of Electronic Devices

(Attachment for Policy No. 237)

Purpose

The purpose of these Administrative Procedures is to guide students, staff, and families regarding appropriate uses of electronic devices by students, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, the Acceptable Use Policy, or as designated in an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan. These Administrative Procedures also provide guidance to school leaders for creating school-specific protocols for student use of cell phones and wearable devices.

Definitions

Electronic devices: All devices that can take photographs; record, play, or edit audio or video data; store, transmit, or receive calls, messages, data, or images; perform online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet.

Computing device: Includes but is not limited to any laptop computer, desktop computer, Chromebook, tablet/iPad, or similar technology equipment that is designed for end-user personal computing, information processing or information consumption.

Wearable device: Any technology that is designed to be used while worn on a person's body. This includes but is not limited to smartwatches, fitness trackers, Bluetooth headphones, and VR headsets.

Procedures

As a general rule, District students **should not use personal computing devices** for educational purposes while inside District buildings and should instead use their District-issued computing device. A personal computing device includes any computing device that was not purchased or issued by the School District of Philadelphia.

All use of District-issued devices and networks shall be in conformity with [Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Technology, and Network Resources](#). Any District staff member can submit a request to unblock an internet resource (website, application, browser extension) via the [Internet Filtering Exception Request application](#) found in the Employee Portal. Most requests must be evaluated by a school or department administrator before being reviewed by the Office of Information Technology. Staff members are encouraged to discuss requests with their administrator(s) prior to submission.

When using any computing device, cell phone, or wearable device, students are expected to adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct](#), if applicable. If any individual desires to make a complaint, please refer to [Policy 219 - Student Complaints](#) and [Policy 906 - Addressing Student and Constituent Concerns](#).

School-Specific Protocols for Student Use of Cell Phones and Wearable Devices

As a general rule, District students should not use cell phones or wearable devices in classrooms unless permitted by a school staff member for educational purposes, or permitted by this Policy expressly. Each school shall create their own protocols that set rules for student use of cell phones and wearable devices. Schools may create protocols that designate areas within the school and times of day where student use of cell phones or wearable devices is permitted, among other rules for student use of cell phones or wearable devices during school hours. Notwithstanding any such designation, any school community may suspend such an allowance.

Guidance for creating school-level protocols for cell phones and wearable devices includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Decisions related to school protocols should be made in collaboration with the broader school community which includes, but is not limited to, students, school staff, parents/guardians, School Advisory Councils, and community partners.
 - Input gathered from the school community does not have to be unanimous; however, school leaders should engage in discussion with various school and community stakeholders to establish protocols that are responsive to their communities and informed by diverse perspectives.
- Protocols should take into consideration the safety concerns associated with use of cell phones and wearable devices or lack thereof (e.g., emergencies, student travel to/from school).
 - *Note:* Using phones in the event of certain emergency situations within the school building can be detrimental to student and staff safety.
- Protocols should take into consideration how student use of cell phones and wearable devices may interrupt or interfere with educational programming.
- Protocols should take into consideration the social and emotional benefits of students having access to cell phones and wearable devices (e.g., connection to friends and family, break time/relaxation, autonomy and responsibility of students).
- Protocols should take into consideration other individual student needs (e.g., services designated by a student's Individualized Educational Plan, translation needs, other requests for accommodation).
- Protocols should include information about communicating safe and responsible use of computing devices, cell phones, and wearable devices to staff, students, and parents/guardians.
 - Please see [this resource](#) from the Office of Educational Technology for consideration.
- Prior to finalizing school-level protocols, school leaders should consider the resources needed to implement decided-upon protocols (e.g., staffing, finances, time).
- Once protocols are finalized, school leaders should communicate to students, parents/guardians, staff, and the broader school community about the reasoning for the decided upon rules and their associated consequences.

At the beginning of each academic year, summer programming, and at points throughout the year, schools shall review with students, staff, and families the school's protocols, the District's Acceptable Use Policy, and practices regarding safe and responsible use of electronic devices, the internet, and social media platforms. It is encouraged that schools provide new students with information about the District's Acceptable Use Policy upon enrollment.

Exceptions and Accommodations

The building administrator may grant approval for possession and use of a telephone paging device/beeper by a student for the following reasons:

1. Student is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance, or rescue squad.
2. Student has a need due to the medical condition of an immediate family member.
3. Other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal.

If a student requires access to a cell phone or wearable device as a part of their educational program, please make a request for accommodation from the Office of Diverse Learners. Use of a cell phone or wearable device by students during educational programming may and should be addressed as part of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 Plan.

Disclaimer

The District shall not be liable for the loss, damage, or misuse of any cell phone or wearable device unless it is lost or damaged while it is in the custody of the District (i.e. if it has been confiscated). The District shall provide no technical support, troubleshooting, or repair for personal electronic devices.

Please use the following link to submit a claim for a lost or damaged device while in the custody of the District:

<https://www.philasd.org/generalcounsel/programsservices/tortcivil-rights-litigationclaims/>

Maintenance Schedule

These Administrative Procedures shall be reviewed upon review of the Policy, or upon the occurrence triggering event. Schools, students, and families will be notified when this Policy and Administrative Procedures are revised.

Related Information:

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

