

# JFCK-R - Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices Procedures

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### **1. Device Storage**

At the elementary school level, students are strongly encouraged to leave their personal electronic devices at home. Should a student bring a device to school, it must be kept off and inaccessible in the student's bag throughout the school day.

The Superintendent or designee will collaborate with middle and high school administrators to develop detailed procedures for ensuring cell phones and other personal electronic devices are inaccessible during the school day. Each school will document its procedures and share them with its school community. All devices must be put on airplane mode or turned off prior to entering the building, no matter what storage system is being used.

### **2. Access to Devices During Extracurricular Activities**

Coaches, club advisors, and other leaders of extracurricular activities outside of the instructional day may give students permission to access personal electronic devices during activities they supervise. MSAD 35 will not be responsible for the loss or damage to personal electronic devices during extracurricular activities.

### **3. Safe and Appropriate Use**

When students do make authorized use of personal electronic devices on school grounds and/or during extracurricular activities, they must adhere to fundamental rules that protect the safety and privacy of the school community. Any violation of the following rules will be subject to the District's discipline policy (JK).

a. Electronic devices may not be used in any manner that disrupts the educational process, is illegal, or violates Board policies and/or school rules.

b. Accessing, viewing, posting, forwarding, downloading, or displaying any materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, and/or illegal is prohibited.

c. The use of cameras on any type of electronic device is strictly prohibited in locker rooms and restrooms. Students are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph or video or audio recording of any individual. Students must also obtain permission from any individual appearing in a photograph or video or audio recording prior to posting on any social media networking site or Internet search site such as YouTube.

#### **4. Consequences for Violations of Device-Free Schools Rules**

Students who are found with an unauthorized personal electronic device during the school day, refuse to give up a personal electronic device when asked by an administrator or other staff member, and/or otherwise violate the policy or procedures related to possession of electronic devices will be subject to the District's discipline policy (JK), including but not limited to more restrictive interventions for the management of their electronic devices.

#### **5. Technology to Support Educational Needs**

MSAD 35 recognizes that technology plays an important part in teaching and learning in a variety of ways. Building administrators will be responsible for working with educators to identify and plan for technology needs, with support from relevant District offices. Additional technology may need to be purchased to enable ongoing student learning where students' personal devices had previously been used. For example, this might include cameras for photography or art classes, tablets for students requiring specialized interpretation, translation, or other communication support, or scientific calculators. District offices will also work with building administrators and educators to identify and make accessible via MSAD 35's devices and network websites any apps that are important for students' learning.

#### **6. Alternative Communications Mechanisms**

Every school will establish a process through which students can make calls to parents/guardians, employers, medical/mental health providers, coaches, or other important contacts, when necessary. At all schools, it is expected that this process will typically run through the front office. There must also be a location where a student can engage in a private conversation, should they need to discuss mental health, legal, or other personal issues of a sensitive nature.

Parents/guardians should minimize communication with students during the school day. If parents/guardians need to communicate with their student during the school day due to an emergency, they should call the school's front office and request assistance in connecting with their child. Parents/guardians who need to pass messages to their child that are important, time-sensitive, and cannot wait until the end of the school day should call the main office and leave a message to be delivered to their student. With support from relevant central offices, each school will establish a system for collecting, monitoring, and communicating non-emergency messages using some combination of phone, email, and/or other District communication platform. The system at each school must include ways for families to communicate in their home languages and ensure accessibility for people with hearing, speech, and/or visual disabilities.

In the event of an emergency at a school, MSAD 35 will send a communication to families as soon as possible to alert them to the situation and then will provide subsequent updates as soon as

possible and as appropriate. These communications will be sent via Thrillshare and, should it become necessary, will include information on if and when students will be released from school and where parents/guardians should pick up their children. It is critical that families not flood school, District, or staff phones in the event of an emergency. The first priority of District and school staff in the event of a reported emergency is to immediately move to keep students, staff, and other community members safe. Overwhelming schools or District offices with calls may interfere with emergency response efforts and put people at greater risk. Families should expect the initial message to be brief, with more detail to follow as information becomes available and can safely be communicated. Further information on [MSAD 35's emergency response plan](#) can be found on our website.

In addition to accounting for family communications, schools will also identify appropriate communication options for coaches, club leaders, advisors, or other school personnel to share important information with students regarding changes in schedules or other time-sensitive information.

## **7. Associated Costs and Budget**

MSAD 35 will fund necessary equipment, training, and technical support to support the launch of the device-free schools policy in the first year of implementation. This includes the cost of pouches, cell phone lockers or hotels, and other related equipment. The District will also support schools in identifying funds to meet technology needs that may arise as students' personal devices become inaccessible in classrooms. In subsequent years, schools will incorporate costs related to implementation of the policy into their budgets for review and approval, as is done with other on-going operating costs.

## **8. Communications of Policy JFCK and JFCK-R**

Upon approval of policies JFCK and JFCK-R, MSAD 35 will launch communications to all students, staff, and families with information about the policy and procedures. Each school will also be responsible for communicating the District's rules and school-based procedures to all students, families, and staff in their communities during August of each school year, at family nights and other back-to-school events, and regularly throughout the year. These communications will include information on how a family may contact their student's school (e.g., via phone or Thrillshare) in the event of an emergency and how the school will support a student to contact their family in the event of an emergency. Staff communications will include training on the consistent application of the rules and how to obtain support from administrators, when needed.

## **9. Education on Digital Citizenship**

The District and all schools will provide ongoing opportunities for students, staff, and families to learn about positive and safe uses of technology. These educational opportunities will also address the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional risks associated with the use of cell phones and other electronic devices by young people, as well as the ways in which they can be disruptive to learning and healthy development.

## **10. Responsible Use of Equipment**

Students that are assigned lockable pouches or lockers to support cell phone storage are expected to treat that equipment with respect. A student that loses or damages such equipment intentionally or through neglectful behavior will be charged for replacement or repair.

## **11. Adult Modeling of Positive Behavior**

School personnel are expected to support students in adhering to this ban by minimizing their own use of personal electronic devices during the school day. This includes avoiding using personal devices while in class or supervising students (e.g., at lunch, on recess, during transition times, at arrival and dismissal, etc.). The Board recognizes there are legitimate work-related reasons that school personnel would need to be on their cell phones during the school day. Whenever possible, school personnel are expected to support students by minimizing their use of cell phones during the school day.

## **12. Monitoring and Updates**

With support from the District's data specialists, schools will track and monitor incidents related to the device-free policy and procedures. The District will work with schools to review successes, challenges, and opportunities to improve the implementation of these procedures on a semi-annual basis and will adapt the procedures as needed. This review will include an examination of student outcome data, as well as specific behavior-related data. A review and/or revision may be conducted outside of this regular cycle if significant concerns arise about implementation challenges.

## **13. Exceptions**

Exceptions to the device-free schools policy will be very limited and rare, only to be made when other viable options for addressing a need or concern are not available. Exceptions will generally be limited to documented health-related needs (e.g., a student whose insulin pump or other health device is controlled by their cell phone) or specific learning-related needs, as defined by an IEP or 504 plan (e.g., a student who requires a specialized personal tablet to support communications that cannot be provided by the school). The building administrator and/or lead teacher must be immediately notified by the school's special services coordinator if an exception is requested through the IEP or 504 process. The building administrator and/or lead teacher or their designee will then work with the IEP team and other school staff to determine a plan for implementing the specific requirements of the IEP or 504. They will also notify the Superintendent and the Director of Special Services via email of this exception for tracking and support purposes.

Any other requests for exceptions must be made directly to the building administrator via email. The building administrator will discuss the details of and reason for the request with the family and determine if it warrants further consideration. If the building administrator recommends that an exception be made due to rare circumstances that cannot be addressed in another way, they will send their recommendation to the Superintendent or their designee, who will review and approve/deny the request.

Cross Reference:

JFCK - Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices

JK - Student Discipline

GCSA-R - Employee Computer, Electronic Device, and Internet Use Rules

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