

Provo City School District

Policy Series: 4000 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment



Policy No. 4200

Fostering Ideal Learning Environments: Electronic Device Restrictions

Introduction:

In our ongoing efforts to foster an ideal learning environment, we acknowledge the significance of cell phones and other electronic devices in modern society. This electronic device policy is designed to establish guidelines for the appropriate use of cell phones and electronic devices within the Provo City School District as we seek to balance the educational benefits of technology with the need for maintaining a productive and focused learning environment. By adhering to this policy, students contribute to a positive and focused learning environment that prioritizes academic achievement and personal responsibility. Cooperation and respect for these guidelines are essential for the safety and well-being of all members of the school community. We also acknowledge the need for educators to design and implement rigorous, engaging lessons from bell to bell to provide productive learning environments that lead to increased student performance.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to accomplish the following:

- Ensure student safety and well-being
- Increase student proficiency and mastery of standards
- Create a productive learning environment by minimizing distractions and interruptions during instructional time
- Encourage responsible and respectful use of technology
- Support effective classroom management practices

Definitions:

Cell phone: handheld, portable electronic device that is designed to be operated using one or both hands and is capable of transmitting and receiving voice, data, or text communication by means of:

- A cellular network
- A satellite network; or
- Any other wireless technology.

A cell phone includes:

- A smartphone;
- A feature phone;
- A mobile phone;
- A satellite phone; or

- A personal digital assistant that incorporates capabilities similar to a smartphone, feature phone, mobile phone, or satellite phone.

Electronic devices: any other device that has or will be able to act in place of or as an extension of an individual's cell phone. An electronic device does not include school provided or required devices.

Smart watch: a wearable computing device that closely resembles a wristwatch or other time-keeping device with the capacity to act in place of or as an extension of an individual's cell phone. A smart watch does not include a wearable device that can only:

- Tell time
- Monitor an individual's health information;
- Or track the individual's physical location.

Earbuds: An earbud is a small, portable audio device designed to fit directly in the outer ear. Typically connected via a cable or Bluetooth, earbuds deliver sound from electronic devices such as smartphones or music players and often come with built-in microphones for calls, noise isolation, and touch controls.

Headphones: A pair of small speakers that are worn over or in the ears, allowing users to listen to audio from devices such as computers, smartphones, or music players. They typically consist of two ear cups connected by a headband and can be wired or wireless. Headphones are used for various purposes, including music listening, gaming, and communication.

Electronic Devices Framework for All School Levels:

- Cell phones and other electronic devices are permitted on school grounds, but their use is restricted to specific times and dedicated locations.
- Students are solely responsible for the care and security of their cell phones and electronic devices. The school is not liable for any loss, theft, or damage to personal devices.
- Usage during class or school activities requires explicit approval from teachers or administrators, aligned with educational purposes. Administrative exceptions may be granted for students with individual education plans (IEPs), 504 accommodations, and individual health plans.
- In the event of an emergency, students may use their cell phones to contact parents/guardians, emergency services, or school personnel. Students must immediately inform a teacher or school administrator if they need to use their cell phone for an emergency situation and follow their school's rules for such use.
- Each individual school shall develop a schoolwide policy for electronic devices that aligns with the requirements and restrictions for their particular level.

Electronic Devices Framework for Elementary Schools:

- Cell phones, smart watches, headphones and earbuds are not to be seen, heard or used in the school building during school hours. Cell phones, headphones, and earbuds must be stowed away in a backpack, secured by the student and set to a mode where notifications cannot be received. While smart watches may be worn, they must also be set so that notifications cannot be sent nor received. Smart watches may not be used to send or receive notifications or make phone calls during the school day.
- If a student needs to communicate with a parent/guardian, they may use their cell phone in either the front office or counseling office with permission. Students are only to contact parents or guardians who may be assisting them with a crisis during the school day.

Electronic Devices Framework for Middle Schools:

- Cell phones, smart watches, headphones and earbuds are not to be seen, heard or used in the school building during school hours. Cell phones, headphones, and earbuds must be stowed away in a backpack, secured by the student and set to a mode where notifications cannot be received. While smart watches may be worn, they must also be set so that notifications cannot be sent nor received.
- If a student needs to communicate with a parent/guardian, they may use their cell phone in either the front office or counseling office with permission. Students are only to contact parents or guardians who may be assisting them with a crisis during the school day.
- Cell phones may not be taken with students when using a hall pass, unless they are going to the office to contact their parent/caretaker. Smart watches may not be used to send or receive notifications or make phone calls when using a hall pass.

Electronic Devices Framework for High Schools:

- Cell phones and electronic devices, such as earbuds and headphones must be stowed away in a backpack, purse, or bag and set to a mode where notifications cannot be received during class sessions. Cell phones cannot be on their person (i.e. in their pocket). While smart watches may be worn, they must also be set so that notifications cannot be sent nor received during class.
- Cell phones may be used before and after school, during class changes, and at lunch.
- Earbuds and headphones must be put away in a backpack, purse, or bag during class sessions.
- Cell phones may not be taken with students when using a hall pass, unless they are going to the office to contact their parent/caretaker. Smart watches may not be used to send or receive notifications or make phone calls when using a hall pass.

Consequences for Violations:

Each school will follow this series of consequences for cell phone, smart watch, earbuds, headphones, and other electronic device violations and communicate this clearly with students and parents. Teachers will be asked to remind students at the beginning of the school day or at

the beginning of class to put their phones, earbuds, and headphones away in their backpacks and to set their electronic devices in a mode where they will not receive notifications.

Violations of this cell phone policy will result in disciplinary action, which will include:

- First offense: Students will be given a container or pouch that can be locked. The student will place their cell phone and/or electronic device(s) in the container, and it will be locked. The student will keep the locked container with their electronic device(s) throughout the remainder of the school day. At the end of the school day, the student will go to the office where an administrator will unlock the container allowing the student to access their electronic device(s).
 - The incident will be recorded as a disciplinary incident in PowerSchool.
 - No cell phones or electronic devices will be confiscated by teachers.
 - Parent/caretaker will be notified if a cell phone or other electronic device has been locked up in a container.

Second offense: The same process will be followed as for the first offense, except the administrator will not unlock the container with the phone or electronic device(s) until is contacted and notified of the second offense. At the parent's request, the electronic device(s) will be unlocked, and the device(s) returned to the student.

The incident will be recorded as a second disciplinary incident in PowerSchool.

No cell phones or electronic devices will be confiscated by teachers.

Parent/caretaker will be notified by the administrator and parent/caretaker will request that the cell phone and/or electronic device(s) be unlocked and returned to the student.

- Third offense: The same process will be followed as for the second offense, except the parent and student will be required to meet with the administrator to create a cell phone and electronic device contract and a plan for supporting the student in following this policy.
- Repeat violations may result in escalated consequences, up to and including suspension or loss of privileges.
- Provo City School District and individual schools will clearly communicate progressive consequences regarding cell phone violations so that parents and students are aware of expectations.
- Students who refuse to lock up their cell phones and electronic devices when prompted by a teacher to do so will be immediately referred to the administration. Students who seek to undermine the consequences of inappropriate use of electronic devices will face further consequences, including but not limited to losing the privilege to bring their phone on campus and receiving a fine for damaging a locked container.

Review and Revision:

This cell phone policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any necessary revisions will be made in consultation with school administrators, faculty, students, and parents/guardians.

Employee Expectations:

For this policy to be successful in creating learning environments that are free from distractions, teachers must create engaging learning environments and teach bell to bell, enforcing the policy as written. Teachers should also model appropriate cell phone use and not use their devices during instructional time, except in emergency situations or in cases where they are using it to support instruction (i.e. timers).

Board Approved: November 12, 2024

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