

**POLICY TITLE:****Cell Phone Policy**

Initial Approval: September 7, 2024

Board Review: September 2026

BACKGROUND:

The Government of Alberta announced a new Ministerial Order this past June. The Order was informed by significant survey feedback provided by families, which overwhelmingly supported introducing restrictions on personal mobile devices in classrooms.

Restricting access to personal mobile devices and social media is expected to improve student achievement and learning outcomes, while supporting student mental health. Beginning September 1, 2024,

Instructional Time:

- Cell phones and smart devices must be powered off and not used during instructional time (instructional time is the time dedicated during the school day to teaching subject area and curricular content and that is supervised by a teacher or other member of the school staff team).
- Cell phones and smart devices must be powered off and not on the student's person during instructional time. This includes all spaces on the school premises.
- Cell phones and smart devices will be powered off and surrendered to the teacher out of the student's reach.
- Wireless earbuds/air pods are not allowed in class.

- If students have permission from their teacher to listen to music in class, they need headphones that are wired into a computer or utilize an MP3 player that cannot connect to the internet.
- Bathroom breaks and student spares are considered instructional time, and cellphones are not to be powered on or accessed during these times.
- Students may bring their own laptops to be used for instructional purposes only.
- Students may only use mobile and smart devices during instructional time when the teacher gives explicit direction for their use as part of learning.
- Devices must be powered off and stored by 9:00 in the morning and 1:00 after lunch.

Non-Instructional Time:

- Cell phones and smart devices can be powered on and used by students in Grades 7-12 during lunch break as well as before and after school.

Exemptions:

Exemptions for cell phone and smart device use for students during instructional time include only:

- Students who require the use of these devices for medical documented purposes.
- Students who require the use of these devices because of complex needs.

Families can work with school staff and administration to assure requisite exemptions are in place.

Social Media:

Social media access will be prohibited on all devices (including laptops) during instructional hours.

Communication:

- Students can communicate with parents during lunch time utilizing personal cell phones.
- Students needing to contact parents regarding an urgent matter during instructional time can use the Student Phone in the Office.
- Parents who need to urgently contact their child during instructional time can call the school office and we will relay the message to them.

Consequences:

Staff are asked to follow the following progressive discipline framework for enforcing the use of mobile devices policy:

- On the first incidence of accessing devices during instructional hours or failing to surrender personal devices at 8:45am or 1:00pm, students will receive a warning.
- The second unauthorized use will result in losing lunch hour access to personal devices for one day.
- The third unauthorized use will result in losing lunch hour access to personal devices for one week and parents being notified.
- Subsequent misuse will result in the personal device being held in the office and a call to parents who will be required to pick up the device, during which time an action plan will be completed.
- Further incidences of use of mobile devices during instructional time could progress to include school suspensions, out of school suspensions, or other reasonable consequences.