

Acceptable Use of District and Personal Digital Devices

Policy 6340

June 3, 2008

Revision Date: March 1, 2018

Revision Date: June 12, 2024

The Board is committed to providing the necessary digital technology to support student learning, while still maintaining a safe learning environment with limited distractions; and to provide staff with the technology required to carry out their duties. At the same time, the Board recognizes the research that shows that frequent cellphone interruptions in the classroom, social media platforms with addictive algorithms, and increasing levels of cyberbullying and digital exploitation of young people, are having a negative impact on instruction, learning, and student mental health.

The District, in conjunction with schools, will develop age-appropriate programming, procedures, and restrictions to aid in the responsible use of both personal and district digital devices that support student learning, well-being, critical use of technology, and the development of both digital literacy and digital citizenship.

The use of District digital devices, and personal digital devices during school hours, must be used only for those purposes that support the goals, objectives and activities as prescribed by the District. All users must be aware of their responsibilities with respect to acceptable use, which must fall within school guidelines, District policies, and all applicable provincial and federal legislation and regulations including but not limited to the *School Act*, *Criminal Code*, and *Human Rights Code*.

Definitions

“Digital Devices” include, but are not limited to, network-connected devices such as cell phones, smartphones, tablet computers, smartwatches and other smart communications devices, and portable video game systems.

REGULATIONS

Access to District Technology, Accounts, and Networks

All students will have access to District-owned technology at an age-appropriate level that supports learning, the development of digital literacy and digital citizenship.

Prior to allowing access to District digital devices and networks, each school will clearly communicate with students, parents and staff the purposes, benefits and risks associated with the use of that resource, as well as any information and permissions required under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA)

The Principal or designate shall ensure that Acceptable Use Forms are signed by students and their parent/guardian. These forms shall be kept on file at the school.

No student shall have access to the District networks unless authorized by a teacher or other designated staff member. Students shall not be granted access to District networks on their personal digital devices.

Use of network accounts by anyone other than the registered account owner is prohibited. The unauthorized use of any account is strictly prohibited and can lead to the immediate loss of access to district technology, accounts, and networks.

Monitoring of Use

Any use of district student and staff accounts (email and otherwise) and digital devices may be examined by District Administration, a Principal, Vice Principal, or the School District technology staff without notice to the account holder to ensure compliance with this policy. All network traffic, including websites viewed and applications used, may be examined at any time to ensure compliance with the policy. While such examination will not be carried out unnecessarily, monitoring software may be used by the district to detect inappropriate use of accounts or technology in support of this policy.

Guidelines for Use

At the elementary school level, the use of and access to personal digital devices will not be permitted at any time during the school day.

At a minimum, access to and the use of personal digital devices at the secondary level will not be permitted during instructional time, both within the classroom and in other settings. When other means and/or district technology cannot be used to support a specific curricular objective/function, the classroom teacher has the discretion to make an exemption for their instructional planning.

As outlined in an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Learning Support Plan (LSP), or health plan, schools will exempt specific students with disabilities and/or diverse needs from restrictions on the use of personal internet-connected devices when they are needed for full inclusion in a specific learning activity or setting, such as for the use of assistive technology or medical monitoring tools.

At no time will the use of any digital devices invade or infringe upon the personal privacy or safety of any member of the school district community. Students must not use digital devices to record audio and/or video in any school setting without the express permission of those being recorded and must not record in settings where there is the potential to violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.

Schools will develop procedures to both implement, and address the contravention of, this policy. Students who contravene this policy may have their personal digital device temporarily confiscated within the school day by the classroom teacher or school administration, be subject to action under *Policy 5210 Student Behaviour and Discipline*, and/or lose access to district accounts, networks, and technology.

The security and storage of personal internet-connected devices is the sole responsibility of the owner/user. The District assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair or replacement of such devices.

Staff will model the expectations required of students, restricting their own use of digital devices during working hours (including during instructional time and while on supervision) to necessary work-related use.