

Heritage Community Charter School

STUDENTS

3265

Student-Owned Electronic Communications Devices

The Board adopts this policy to place controls on the use of student-owned electronic devices at school. There has been a rising concern that spending too much time on social media or using cell phones may be detrimental to students' physical and mental health. The Board's priority is that all students are engaged in learning without distraction.

By placing limits on the permissible use of such electronic devices, the Board intends to:

1. Adopt policy in alignment with State Department of Education guidance on cell phones;
2. Promote student safety;
3. Support staff in maintaining an environment that encourages learning;
4. Reduce distractions in the learning environment;
5. Improve academic focus;
6. Promote responsible technology use;
7. Prevent cyberbullying;
8. Mitigate the privacy concerns posed by personal electronic devices

This policy shall apply to any electronic device not issued by the Charter School that is capable of accessing the internet or sending an electronic message to another device, such as smart phones, other cell phones, tablets, laptops, e-readers, and smart watches. E-readers and smart watches may be used ONLY if internet access is disabled.

Restrictions on Time and Location of Use

Students are prohibited from using cell phones in the following times and places:

1. On school property;
2. During class time;
3. During passing periods;
4. During lunch;
5. In bathrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms; and
6. School field trips

Students are permitted to use cell phones in the following times and places:

1. At school activities outside of school hours;
2. With permission and in the presence of an administrator

Any use of an electronic device required by a student's 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall be permitted regardless of whether it would otherwise violate this policy.

Students may use a personal electronic device in the case of an emergency to contact help. In this policy, an emergency is an event that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of any

person or a risk of damage to property. If a student needs to use a personal electronic device in such an emergency, they should ensure they are in as safe a location as is feasible.

If a student's parent/guardian or their designee needs to contact a student in the case of an emergency at a time when student cell phone use is not permitted, the parent/guardian or designee should call the school office and ask staff to relay the message or bring the student to the office to speak with the parent/guardian or designee by phone.

Containment of Devices

When use of personal electronic devices is not permitted, such devices must be stored in the student's locker; the student's backpack/bag or the front office.

The Executive Director may set further procedures and rules to ensure this policy is followed. The School may also make use of technology-based approaches, such as monitoring or blocking internet access.

Students are responsible for safeguarding devices they bring to school. The School shall not be responsible for loss, theft, damages, or destruction of student owned devices brought onto school property.

Use of Devices

Any use of personal electronic devices at school or at school events shall comply with Procedure 3270P Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks. Student-owned electronic devices shall not be used in a manner that disrupts the educational process, including, but not limited to, posing a threat to academic integrity or violating confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual.

Access to the devices is a privilege and not a right. Each student will be required to follow the Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy and the Internet Access Conduct Agreement.

Students may only access the internet through the Charter School's filtered connection, regardless of whether they are using their personal device or a School-issued device. School staff will not provide software or technical assistance for student-owned devices.

Because power cords stretched out in classrooms become a safety issue both for the students and devices, charging the device with such a cord in any classroom, hallway, or any other location that may be a safety concern may be prohibited.

The use of cameras in any type of electronic device is strictly prohibited in restrooms and classrooms unless a certified Charter School employee authorizes the student to do otherwise. Where students are allowed to use electronic devices, they are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph or video of any individual. Students must also obtain permission from any individual appearing in a photograph or video prior to posting on any social networking site or other internet site.

Students found to be using any electronic communications device to in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on any student assessment, project, or assignment shall be subject to discipline.

Students shall comply with any additional rules developed by the school and classroom teacher concerning appropriate use of personal electronic devices.

Disciplinary Action

1st Offense: Device will be brought to the office by the student or a staff member. The student's name will be recorded and the device may be picked up after school by the student.

2nd Offense: Device will be brought to the main office by the student or a staff member. The student's name will be recorded and the parent/guardian is required to pick it up.

3rd Offense: Device will be brought to the main office by the student or a staff member. The student will receive 3 days of lunch detention. Device must be picked up by parent/guardian. Student must check the device into the office each morning and pick it up from the office each afternoon OR not bring the device to school for the remainder of the school year.

Students violating the provisions of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, which may include losing the privilege of bringing the device onto school property, detention, and/or confiscation of the device until it is retrieved by the student's parent/guardian. If a student or a parent/guardian wishes to appeal such disciplinary action, they can do so by submitting a written request for appeal to the building principal within 3 school days. If the decision being appealed was made by the building principal, the appeal may instead be made to the Executive Director.

Students who violate the privacy provisions of this policy and/or use a device to violate the privacy rights of another person may have their device confiscated and held until a parent/guardian picks it up, and may be directed to delete the audio and/or picture/video file. If the violation involves potentially illegal activity the confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement.

Violation of this policy may also result in suspension or expulsion, as described in Policy 3340 Corrective Actions and Punishment, if appropriate.

The district will use reasonable care to safeguard confiscated devices by designating a storage area, but does not assume liability in the event such confiscated device is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Implementation & Review of Policy

The Board directs the Executive Director or their designee to inform staff, students, and parents/guardians about this policy and how it will be implemented. The Board also directs the Executive Director or their designee to develop practices that reinforce the importance of and ways of addressing:

1. Digital literacy lessons;
2. The effects of cyberbullying;
3. Privacy concerns; and
4. Online disinformation.

The Executive Director shall report to the Board each year about the effectiveness of this policy and shall recommend changes to it as needed.

Cross References: 3270P Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks
 3340 & 3340P Corrective Actions and Punishment

Legal References: Executive Order 2024-11 Phone Free Learning Act

Other References: Policy Checklist for LEAs, Idaho Department of Education,
<https://sde.idaho.gov/topics/cell-phone-policy/>

Policy History:

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Revised on: 02-27-2025

Reviewed on: