

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

No. 237

Section: 200 Pupils

Title: Student Use of
Electronic Devices

Adopted: August 21, 2014

Revised: June 29, 2023

237 STUDENT USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Purpose

The Board of Education (“Board”) adopts this Policy to contribute toward the maintenance of an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, and secure for School District of Philadelphia (“District”) students and employees. Further, the Board recognizes that certain electronic devices can be used for educational purposes.

Definitions

Electronic devices: All devices that can take photographs; record, play, or edit audio or video data; store, transmit, or receive calls, messages, data, or images; perform online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet.

Computing device: Includes but is not limited to any laptop computer, desktop computer, Chromebook, tablet/iPad, or similar technology equipment that is designed for end-user personal computing, information processing or information consumption.

Wearable device: Any technology that is designed to be used while worn on a person’s body. This includes but is not limited to smartwatches, fitness trackers, Bluetooth headphones, and VR headsets.

Authority

As required by the Pennsylvania Public School Code, the Board shall adopt and post on its public website a Policy regarding use of electronic devices.[1]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board directs the Superintendent or their designee, through the Office of Student Support Services and other collaborating offices, to develop Administrative Procedures that outline acceptable use of electronic devices that are consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, the

Acceptable Use Policy, or as designated in an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan.[2][3][4][5]

The Superintendent or their designee, through the Office of Information Technology, shall provide filtered Internet access for educational purposes for student use in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and the Acceptable Use Policy.[5]

Mandatory Regulatory Procedures

As a general rule, District students may not use personal computing devices, including for educational purposes, while inside District buildings and should instead use their District-issued computing device. A personal computing device includes any computing device that was not purchased or issued by the School District of Philadelphia.

Cell phones and wearable devices may be used only in accordance with school-specific protocols.

Unauthorized Use of Electronic Devices

The Board prohibits use of all electronic devices by students in locker rooms, bathrooms, and other changing areas.

The Board prohibits the taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing.

Audio and videotaping shall be consistent with state and federal laws. Recording anyone without their knowledge and permission is prohibited and may be punishable under federal, state, and local laws.

Off-Campus Activities

This Policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Student Code of Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:[4]

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether or not via District furnished transportation.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.[6][7]
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.

4. The conduct has a direct connection to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Student Code of Conduct if conducted in school.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.
6. There is otherwise a connection between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy by a student may result in disciplinary action and may result in confiscation of the electronic device.[4][8][9]

Violations of this policy may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law and the District may report such conduct to state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

Legal References:

1. 24 P.S. 510.2
2. 24 P.S. 510
3. Policy 113 - Special Education
4. Policy 218 - Student Conduct and Discipline
5. Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Technology and Network Resources
6. Policy 122 - Extracurricular Activities
7. Policy 123 - Interscholastic Athletics
8. Policy 226 - Searches
9. Policy 233 - Suspension and Expulsion

Related Information:

[Administrative Procedures for Student Use of Electronic Devices](#)