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## USE OF PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES (PDDs)

### Background

Openness to new and future technologies and their educated use create opportunities for many constructive and positive uses that can aid the instructional process. Further, regulated use of some personal digital devices in the school and community, may contribute to the safety and security of students and staff. However, unregulated use of such devices may pose a risk to personal safety, disrupt instruction, invade personal privacy, and may compromise academic integrity. The District recognizes that frequent cellphone interruptions in the classroom, addictive social media algorithms, and increasing cyberbullying and online exploitation of young people negatively impact instruction, learning, and student mental health. In response, the District, in conjunction with schools, will develop age-appropriate restrictions, programming, and procedures for student use of personal digital devices that support the development of good digital citizens.

### Definition

Personal Digital Devices: refers to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or access the internet, including but not limited to cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, and handheld video game systems.

Instructional Time: encompasses regular classroom settings, assemblies, guest speakers, field trips, and other events organized by teachers or administrators.

### Procedures

1. Students will have access to school/district owned technology at an age-appropriate level that supports learning and the development of digital technology skills and digital citizenship.
2. As outlined in an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Learning Support Plan (LSP), or health plan, schools will exempt specific students from restrictions on the use of personal digital devices (PDDs) when they are needed for full inclusion in a specific learning activity.
3. PDDs are to be stored in silent mode during instructional time to ensure a focused learning environment. At the teacher's discretion, an exemption may be made when the use of such devices supports a specific curricular objective and is part of instruction. It is generally expected that the use of PDDs will be extremely limited in the elementary years.
4. PDDs are not to be taken into test or examination settings unless students have been given permission to do so.



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5. In the event that PDDs are used for photographing or recording images of students or staff in schools or at associated facilities or activities, such photos will only be uploaded to school, public, or private websites with the written consent of the individuals, or their parents, depicted in the media.
6. Students who bring PDDs to the school are expected to comply with all parts of **Administrative Procedure 350 – District Student Code of Conduct**. Students who consistently refuse to comply with the District’s procedures for use of PDDs in the school setting may be subject to disciplinary measures detailed in the school’s rules, as well as the steps outlined in Administrative Procedure 350.
  - 6.1 Principals will use progressive discipline reflective of the age and maturity of the student, any special needs, and the severity and frequency of the unacceptable conduct.
7. Principals, in consultation with staff and appropriate stakeholders (including the parents’ advisory councils), are to formulate and implement specific procedures at each school site. All schools are expected to incorporate the intent of this policy into their codes of conduct.
8. In the event of an emergency, such as a lockdown or an evacuation, the Principal will develop and inform the school community of the acceptable use of PDDs in that emergency.
9. PDDs are valuable electronic devices. The security and storage of these items is the sole responsibility of the owner/user. The District assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair, or replacement of PDDs.
  - 9.1 PDDs which are taken temporarily from students by teachers or administrators must be securely stored.
  - 9.2 Confiscated items shall be returned to the student only after discussion with the parent, student, and school personnel.

Reference: Sections 6, 8, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 *School Act*  
School Regulation 265/89  
*Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order*

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