



# Board of Education Policy Manual

## ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

**[DRAFT]**

**AR 5300.31**

## **STUDENT USE OF INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICES**

### **PURPOSE**

This Administrative Regulation (AR) provides the specific procedures and guidelines for the implementation of Board Policy P5300.31 Student Use of Internet-Enabled Devices. It details the expectations for student conduct regarding internet-enabled devices during the school day, outlines permitted exceptions, and describes the methods for enforcement and communication. This regulation aims to foster a focused learning environment, minimize distractions, promote responsible digital citizenship, and ensure compliance with New York State Education Law §2803.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- **Internet-Enabled Device:** Any electronic device that can connect to the internet, including but not limited to cellular phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, and portable gaming devices. District-issued Chromebooks or other devices used for instructional purposes are exempt when used as directed by school staff.
- **School Day:** The period from the first bell to the final dismissal bell, including instructional time, passing time, homeroom, lunch periods, and any school-sponsored activities or events occurring on school property.
- **After School Activity Period:** The period of time immediately following the “school day” typically used for extracurricular activities and extra help.

### **PROCEDURES FOR GRADES K-8**

For students in Grades K-8, a total and proactive bell-to-bell ban on internet-enabled devices remains in effect, continuing a long-standing and successful practice already developed through shared decision-making by Building Councils and communicated to parents in the Elementary and Middle School Student Handbooks.

1. **Prohibition:** Students are prohibited from possessing or using internet-enabled devices at any time during the school day or after school activity period.

2. **Storage:** Upon arrival at school, students must place their internet-enabled devices securely in their designated lockers (middle school) or cubbies (elementary school). Devices must remain stored and out of sight for the entire school day.
3. **Alternative Communication:** Parents/guardians are advised that they can contact the main office at any time to connect with their child in case of an emergency or urgent need. Students will be permitted to use school phones with permission from school staff to contact parents/guardians.

## PROCEDURES FOR GRADES 9-12

For students in Grades 9-12, this regulation continues and further develops the successful practices implemented in 2024, placing increased responsibility on students while ensuring compliance with state law.

1. **General Prohibition:** The use of internet-enabled devices by students is strictly prohibited during the entire school day, including during passing time, homeroom, and lunch periods.
2. **General Storage of Internet-Connected Devices:** Students can store their phone in their locker for the entire school day.
3. **No-Use During Instructional Time:** If a student is not using the locker as a storage option they must, upon entering any classroom for an instructional block or study hall, immediately place their internet-enabled device securely in a designated pouch on the wall for the entirety of that block. (This practice encourages and models responsibility by requiring students to set their phones aside in a safe location during class times. This ensures "separation" from devices throughout the day and prevents "continuous and unsupervised access" as discussed in state guidance.)
4. **No Use During Non-instructional Times:** Students are not permitted to use their internet-enabled devices in hallways, during lunch, during homeroom, or during passing time between classes. Internet-enabled devices must be powered off or on silent mode and securely stored during all non-instructional times (homeroom, passing time, lunch). Devices must not be visible or accessible for use.
5. **Bathroom Policy:** Students are not permitted to take their internet-enabled devices with them if they leave the classroom for the bathroom or any other reason during instructional time. This has demonstrated a significant reduction in unnecessary sign-outs.
6. **Alternative Communication:**
  - Parents/guardians can contact the main office at any time to connect with their child.
  - Students will be permitted to use school phones with permission from school staff to contact parents/guardians.
  - Google Chat will be available on student Chromebooks for parents to communicate with students during appropriate times as determined by school staff.
7. **Stakeholder Input:** The basic structure and function of this plan was developed by the High School Building Council (Shared Decision Making Team) in 2024 and re-endorsed by the Building Council in

2025. The updates to the plan are only those that are required by law (no use during non-instructional time and the inclusion of smart watches as “internet-connected devices”). The updates policy and regulation went through the full policy development process as described in policy [P2410](#) and it was discussed with parents and input was given by parents on multiple occasions including through the Principal’s Advisory committee.

## EXEMPTIONS

1. **Statutory Exemptions:** This regulation establishes exemptions on the prohibition of student use of an internet-enabled device during the school day on school grounds (i) if authorized by a teacher, principal, or the school district, charter school, or board of cooperative educational services for a specific educational purpose; (ii) where necessary for the management of a student's healthcare; (iii) in the event of an emergency; (iv) for translation services; (v) on a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor, for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member; or (vi) where required by law.
2. **Other Exemptions:** These regulations do not not prohibit a student's use of an internet-enabled device where such use is included in the student's (i) individualized education program; or (ii) plan developed pursuant to section five hundred four of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794.

## ENFORCEMENT & CONSEQUENCES

Consistent and coordinated enforcement of this regulation is paramount. Violations of this regulation will result in consequences as outlined in the District's Code of Conduct and individual level student handbooks, which will include well-delineated penalties. The District will provide support, including additional personnel if necessary, to ensure effective enforcement. This regulation should be likened to other state laws that require compliance, such as the prohibition of cell phone use while driving, emphasizing that compliance is mandatory. This regulation prohibits the suspension of a student if the sole grounds for the suspension is that the student accessed an internet-enabled device in violation of this regulation.

## COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS & STUDENTS

This Administrative Regulation, along with Board Policy P5300.31, will be published in the District's online policy manual, included as part of the student Code of Conduct, and communicated annually to all students and parents/guardians through various means, including school websites, principal emails, student handbooks, and parent information sessions.

## REVIEW

This Administrative Regulation shall be reviewed annually by the Superintendent or their designee to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with Board Policy and New York State Education Law.

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Reference:

P5300.31 Student Use of Internet-Connected Devices

