

USE OF PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICE (PDD)

Background

Embracing emerging technologies through informed usage can enhance student learning. Conversely, the lack of oversight regarding these devices might jeopardize personal safety, disrupt the flow of instruction, infringe upon privacy, and threaten the integrity of instructional time. Acknowledging the need for limitations on personal digital devices, we also recognize our duty to teach digital literacy and promote online safety. Digital literacy is an essential competency in the modern, tech-centric world. Our goal is to cultivate students who are conscientious, well-informed, and principled in their digital interactions. By weaving technology into our teaching and offering chances to use it, we are preparing our students with the necessary skills for productivity, innovation, critical analysis, and teamwork. In addition, research has shown that creating appropriate structures around the use of personal digital devices positively impacts students' mental health and ability to focus on learning.

Definition

Personal Digital Device (PDD): Refers to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as cell phones, tablets, smart watches, gaming devices, and electronic toys, and includes the use of earbuds and headphones.

Procedures

1. Elementary Schools: PDDs are not to be accessed at any time during the school day including instructional time, recess and lunch. Given that elementary students are continuously supervised, the school will communicate with parents should any urgent situations occur.
2. Secondary Schools: PDDs are not permitted during instructional time except when explicitly required by the teacher for educational purposes. Such exceptions may be granted when these devices directly support specific curricular objectives and are integrated into the instructional planning. The school will communicate with parents should any urgent situations occur.
3. PDDs must be securely stored in a designated area, separate from the owner, to help reduce distractions and ensure an environment conducive to learning. Individual schools will determine storage and access to PDDs.
4. PDDs are not to be used in settings such as change rooms, washrooms, private counseling rooms, that have the potential to violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
5. Students with disabilities or unique learning abilities may utilize PDDs as part of their designated support plans or Individual Education Plans (IEPs). This encompasses employing assistive technologies on such devices within the school environment to enhance students' access, communication, and self-reliance.

6. Students with health-related requirements may utilize PDDs as determined by medical professionals as outlined in their support plans and IEPs.
7. Restrictions on PDDs will not unfairly affect certain students. As an example, we will provide access to computers or phones for students lacking internet at home, enabling them to use school resources to complete their assignments.
8. Students may be given instructions to access their PDDs during emergency situations.
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.
10. Non-compliance with the Personal Digital Device Procedure 145 will initiate a process of progressive discipline as detailed in Procedure 350 - Student Conduct and Discipline

Reference: Sections 6, 8, 20, 22, 65, 85 *School Act*
School Regulation 265/89

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