

A. Purpose

The District is committed to providing students with a learning environment free from disruptions and distractions. Use of personal communication devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, other communication devices, smartwatches, etc.) for nonacademic means often leads to disruptions and distractions in the learning environment for both individual students and the classroom.

For the purposes of this policy, a personal communication device is defined as any non-District-provided internet/cellular-capable device that can support voice or video calls, texts, emails, or instant messages. Personal communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellphones, tablets, laptops, and smartwatches. For ease of reference, devices provided by the District for instructional use shall be referred to as "District-owned" or "District-provided" devices.

B. Restrictions

Per state law RSA 189:1-a, V student use of personal communication devices is **strictly prohibited** from when the first bell rings to start instructional time until the dismissal bell rings to end the academic school day (referred to as "the school day"). The school day includes lunch periods, passing time, and recesses.

Students participating in extracurricular activities, co-curricular activities, field trips, or other activities outside of the school day shall abide by the rules and consequences established for personal communication devices set by the coach, instructor, sponsor, or other designated supervisor for the activity. However, **in no event** shall personal communication devices (or any other device with photographic or recording capabilities) be used in locker rooms, bathrooms, or any other location where such use could violate another person's reasonable expectation of privacy.

If digital devices are used to enhance learning in the classroom, the District is responsible for providing District-owned devices.

While the best practice is not to bring these devices to school, students who bring these devices to school shall keep them powered off and stored where specified by the student's school handbook (e.g., locker, backpack, handbag). The District will not be responsible for loss, damage, or theft of any electronic communication device brought to the school.

Contacting Students During the School Day

While students are prohibited from using personal communication devices during the school day, we understand that there may be instances when a parent or guardian needs to contact their child or vice versa. To ensure students can receive important messages or make necessary contact with their families, we recommend that all communication go through the main office of the school the student attends.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to call the main office if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. Our staff will assist in relaying the message to the student or arranging for a call if necessary. This helps ensure that communication is handled promptly and minimizes disruptions to the learning environment.

Emergency Protocols

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is our top priority. In the event of an emergency, the Milford School District will use its official communication channels, including **District messaging systems** (email, phone calls, and text alerts), to provide critical updates and instructions to parents and the community. These systems are designed to quickly relay important information regarding safety protocols, school closures, or other emergencies.

We ask that parents and guardians rely on these official District communication methods in the event of an emergency. Students are not permitted to use personal devices to contact family members during emergencies as this can create confusion and disrupt emergency response efforts. All emergency communication will be handled through the District's established protocols to ensure accurate and timely information is shared.

C. Exceptions

Students with medical needs, such as insulin pumps and glucose sensors, or disabilities that require a device to support their learning as identified by their individualized education program (IEP) or plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. section 794, or a multilingual student with appropriate language access programs and services pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 shall be exempt from this policy for the time period required to meet their specified needs. In the event an exception is not approved, alternatives may be suggested. Additionally, the Superintendent or their designee may approve additional exceptions on a case-by-case basis with respect to student medical, disability, or language proficiency needs.

D. Consequences and Violations

In accordance with state law, students are prohibited from using personal communication devices during the entire school day, including instructional time, lunch periods, passing times, and recess. All devices must be powered off and stored as specified within their school handbook (e.g., locker, backpack, handbag) - not on their person (e.g., in a pocket).

Students are not permitted to use any electronic device to record audio or video media, or take pictures of any student or staff member without their permission. The distribution of any unauthorized media may result in disciplinary action.

The school reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, and review a student's personal electronic device, subject to the limitations of RSA 189:70, if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has violated board policies, regulations, or school rules, or has engaged in other misconduct while using their personal electronic device.

Consequences for violations of this policy will be pursuant to Policy JIC - Student Conduct.

Additionally, students violating this policy will have the following consequences:

1. **First Offense:** Warning and confiscation of the device for the remainder of the school day.
2. **Second Offenses:** The electronic communication device will be confiscated. A disciplinary referral will be written. The student's parent/guardian must pick up the device from the principal's office during school office hours.
3. **Third Offense:** The electronic device will be confiscated, and a discipline referral will be written. The student's parent/guardian must pick up the device from the principal's office during school office hours. For a designated period of time determined by the building principal, the student will be required to bring the device to the school's main office every morning where it will be stored until the student retrieves it at the end of the school day.

4. **Fourth and Subsequent Offenses:** The electronic device will be confiscated, and a discipline referral will be written. The student's parent/guardian must pick up the device from the principal's office during school office hours. The parent and student will be required to attend a mandatory meeting to develop a device-free plan.

E. Review

The Superintendent shall annually review policy in collaboration with parent(s) and teachers, with a report and recommendations for policy changes to be delivered to the Board no later than April 1 of each school year.

F. Dissemination

The Superintendent shall ensure that information regarding the prohibition against using personal communication devices during the school day is included in all student handbooks, and included in "beginning of school year" materials provided to parents/guardians.

Legal References

RSA 189:68, Student Privacy

RSA 189:68-a, Student Online Personal Information

RSA 189:70, Educational Institution Policies on Social Media

RSA 644:21, Searches of Portable Electronic Devices

2294 (EHAB), Data Governance and Security

JIC, Student Conduct

Adopted: August 18, 2025