

ACCEPTABLE USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

I. BY EMPLOYEES

- A. As long as possession does not interfere with educational processes or compromise the safety of staff and students or the security of the school, employees may possess a cellular telephone or other personal electronic communication device(s) (ECD) in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school-related functions.
- B. Employees may use ECDs or allow students to use ECDs in a manner that enhances educational opportunities or educational experiences. Employees are encouraged to promote responsible and respectful use of ECDs by students so long as the use does not infringe on the rights of others or disrupt educational activities.
- C. Except on an infrequent or emergency basis or when being used to enhance educational opportunities, ECDs must remain off during the instructional day. Use of a cellular phone or other ECD shall comply with District guidelines for use of district provided telecommunications (Regulation 2940-1). Employees shall not use a cellular telephone or other ECD in a manner that disrupts or distracts from instructional time.
- D. Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who also have a cell phone or pager for either business or personal use are prohibited from using ECDs while operating a moving vehicle for district business. Use of hand-free devices is permitted. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of ECDs while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.
- E. Topeka Public Schools are NOT responsible for theft, loss or damage to electronic devices brought to school by an employee.

II. BY STUDENTS

- A. As long as possession does not interfere with educational processes or compromise the safety of staff and students or the security of the school, a student may possess a cellular telephone or other electronic communication device (ECD) in school, on school property, on school buses, at after school activities, and at school-related functions. During the school day and at school-sponsored activities, student will comply with administrative or school employee directives relating to the use of cellular phones and other ECDs.
- A. Cellular telephones and other ECDs must remain off and out of sight in classrooms or during instructional time unless use of the ECD is specifically authorized by the classroom teacher. Exceptions may be made in special circumstances with prior approval from the principal or designee. Use of a cellular telephone or other ECD shall not be allowed if the use will be disruptive to other students' instructional time. However, at the high schools, students are permitted to use cellular phones and other ECDs during the lunch period and passing periods.
- B. Students are permitted to use cellular phones and other ECDs before and after the school day, as defined by the building principal. The principal may confine the use of ECDs to certain defined locations in each building.
- C. Students are permitted to use cellular phones and other ECDs on school buses as

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- long as they use earbuds/headphones and it does not cause a disruption or distraction to the bus driver or other students. ~~At no time should photographs or videos be taken on the bus. No phone calls should be made on the bus except in emergencies.~~ If it is determined that cellular phones or other ECDs are causing a disruption or a distraction on the bus, the bus driver or other staff may restrict their use at any time.
- D. A student who brings his/her privately owned ECD or computer to school is personally responsible for the equipment. Any damage to the equipment is the responsibility of the individual. Topeka Public Schools is NOT responsible for theft, loss or damage to electronic devices brought to school by a student or confiscated by a school employee for violation of these policies governing the acceptable use of such devices.**
- E. No privately owned ECD may be attached or connected, wired or wireless, to the Topeka Public Schools network except by Technology Department personnel when authorized by the Network Administrator.**
- F. Possession of a cellular telephone or other ECD by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of the device so as to violate the law, district policies or school rules. In addition to those conduct rules set forth elsewhere, the following violations may result in disciplinary action under student disciplinary policies:**
- 1. Accessing and/or viewing an Internet site that is otherwise blocked to students at school.**
 - 2. Sending an e-mail, text message, photograph or other communication that harasses, intimidates, threatens, bullies, or discriminates against another individual, including sexting.**
 - 3. Using a camera device at school or a school-sponsored event to take, send, download or upload an unwanted, harassing, threatening, or embarrassing photograph of anyone.**
 - 4. Using a camera in a restroom, dressing room, or locker room.**
 - 5. Using a camera or other recording device to record or capture the content of tests, assessments, homework, or classwork without express prior permission from the instructor.**
 - 6. Using any ECD for sharing information in any way that may be deemed cheating.**
- G. If an ECD is visible or a student is found using an ECD during the school day in violation of this policy, the following actions will occur:**

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1. The staff member witnessing the offense will direct the student to turn the ECD off and put it out of sight.
 2. If the student fails to comply with the request, the incident will be reported to the principal (disciplinary referral) who will determine what disciplinary action is appropriate under the circumstances.
- III. Possession or use of an ECD in violation of this policy may result in loss of the privilege of possessing or using an ECD on school property, or other penalties up to and including short- or long-term suspension. Inappropriate use of an ECD for purposes of cheating, harassing, bullying, etc, or which violate additional school policies or the law may result in more severe penalties, up to and including expulsion. **IN GENERAL**
- A. Any use of an ECD or privately owned computer at school must comply with the Topeka Public Schools Policy 2935 on Acceptable Use of Computers, Computer Networks, Internet, Electronic Mail and Other Online Services. Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy through use of personally owned ECDs or computers may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or expulsion.
 - B. Inappropriate use of ECDs may result in the disciplinary action, including but not limited to confiscation of the device and banning the use of any electronic device by that student or employee.
 - C. The contents of a cellular phone, camera, or other ECD may be searched to determine ownership or to identify emergency contacts. Upon reasonable suspicion that a school rule, district policy or the law has been violated through the use of an ECD, search for evidence of the suspected wrongdoing may also occur. ECD means any and all parts of the ECD. Any refusal on the part of a student or employee to comply with a request to surrender the ECD may result in disciplinary action.
 - D. A cellular telephone or ECD that has been confiscated and not turned over to law enforcement will be released to the employee or to the parent or guardian of a student when it is no longer necessary for investigation or disciplinary proceedings. At the discretion of the principal, the cellular telephone or ECD may be returned directly to the student.
 - E. Information on these policies and/or regulations will be provided to staff and students annually.