

SUBJECT: STUDENTS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**I. PURPOSE**

The Windham-Ashland-Jewett Board of Education recognizes that students may have personal electronic devices that can perform different functions. At all levels “internet-enabled devices” are defined as: any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications, but do not include any such device supplied by the district for educational purposes.

These devices can create significant distraction in the school environment, negatively impact student mental health, contribute to disciplinary infractions, and reduce student engagement.

II. POLICY**Device Access and Storage**

As required by Education Law §2803, this policy prohibits student use of internet enabled devices during the school day (including all classes, homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time) on school grounds (any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the boundary of a school district or BOCES facility), unless under an exception (e.g., IEP/Section 504 or as permitted below).

Student internet-enabled devices must be turned off and out of sight upon arrival and for the duration of the school day. (7:45-2:45 PM). Internet enabled devices should not be on their person and must be stored in student secured lockers during the day.

Communication with Parents/Persons in Parental Relation

During the school day, to minimize distractions, parents, caregivers and guardians may contact their children via the following method:

- Call the main office of the school – (518)734-3400
- Students will also be able to contact their parents, caregivers or guardians by requesting to go to the main office to call home.

The district will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and in the case of new registrant students upon enrollment.

Exceptions for Specific Purposes

Use of internet-enabled devices may be permitted where included in a student’s Individualized Education Program, Section 504 plan, or where required by law. Additionally, the district may permit the use of internet-enabled devices under the following circumstances:

Students

- Where necessary to manage a student's healthcare (e.g., diabetes, asthma, medication etc.);
- For translation services, and/or
- For students who are routinely responsible for the care and well-being of a family member (on a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor).

Under any of these exceptions, devices may only be used for the purpose outlined in the exception, and the device must be silenced and put away when not in use, to the extent compatible with the reason for the exception.

Use of Internet Enabled Devices for Educational Purposes

The district provides students with one-to-one devices; therefore, personal electronic devices are not permitted for educational purposes. At the discretion of the superintendent of schools, student access and use permission may be granted for educational purposes.

Enforcement, Consequences and Reporting

The district aims to reinforce this policy through educating students regarding the positive benefits of attending school in a distraction-free environment, but also through progressive disciplinary methods prescribed within the district's Code of Conduct.

Electronic Devices and Testing

To ensure the integrity of testing, in accordance with state guidelines, students may not bring cell phones or other electronic devices into classrooms or other exam locations during all testing.

Students with Individualized Education Plans, Section 504 Plans, or an approved medical exemption specifically requiring use of electronic devices may do so as specified.

Policy Distribution and Translation

As required by law, the district will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website. Upon request by a student or parent, the district will translate this policy.

The district will also use multiple communications methods including its website, School Messenger and other methods to include this information, or a plain language summary, in publications such as the school calendars and newsletters issued to families and employees.

Beginning September 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the district will publish a report on its website detailing the enforcement of this policy over the past year.

