



Frequently Asked Questions – Grades 9-12

Policy 311 – Responsible Use of Digital Technology in Schools

Cellphones and Personal Devices

Q. Can students in grades 9 to 12 use cellphones or personal mobile devices at school?

For the semester that begins in September 2026, students will have the same rules as last year: they may use their devices during non-instructional time, such as breaks and lunch periods, or as otherwise determined by the school. During instructional time, devices must be silenced and put away unless the teacher authorizes it for educational purposes.

When the second semester begins in February 2027, students will not be permitted to use cellphones or personal mobile devices from first bell to last bell, including breaks between classes and lunch. Phones must be in silent mode and put away.

Personal laptops and tablets may be used during instructional time as part of the BYOD program, as authorized by the teacher for educational purposes.

Q. What are personal mobile devices?

Under Policy 311, a personal mobile device is any electronic device that is *not* provided by the Department, the school district, or the school. The policy's examples include, but are not limited to, cellphones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, wireless earbuds, and portable gaming devices. **Exceptions for laptops and tablets under BYOD*

Q. What happens if a student does not follow these rules?

For the first semester, students in Grades 9 to 12 will have the same rules as last year.

Beginning February 1, 2027, if a student in grades 9 to 12 is found to have a cellphone or personal mobile device with them that is not stored as required by the policy, school personnel may confiscate the device until the end of day.

Students may also face disciplinary action if device use disrupts the learning environment (for example, cheating, plagiarism, bullying, harassment, or recording others without their consent).



Exemptions and Accommodations

Q. Are there exceptions for students who need access to a personal mobile device?

Yes. Exceptions may be made when a student needs a cellphone or personal mobile device for medical or health-related needs (such as apps for diabetes self-management), accessibility needs, or accommodation requirements. These exceptions must be documented in the student's health plan or Personalized Learning Plan.

Q. If a student relies on a device for accessibility or medical reasons, can it still be taken away for misuse?

Rather than simply confiscating the device, school personnel will implement individualized strategies that address the inappropriate use while maintaining the student's access to essential supports, such as where the device is used for accessibility, for critical communication (such as a translation device), or for medical reasons as documented in a student's health plan or Personalized Learning Plan.

Digital Tools and Classroom Content

Q. Which devices can be used for digital content and educational activities?

For students in grades 9 to 12, approved software and digital content for educational purposes may be used on devices provided by the school district or on personal tablets or laptops as part of the BYOD program. Internet access will be through the school network.

Q. Are there rules about the digital content teachers use in class?

Yes. The use of software, online resources, videos, and other digital content in the classroom must support curriculum outcomes and educational purposes. School personnel must ensure that digital resources are used intentionally and purposefully as part of planned instruction to enhance teaching and learning.

Social Media and the School Network

Q. Can students access social media on the school network?

Social media platforms, as determined by the Department in collaboration with the school districts, will be blocked from the school network.