

Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Electronic Devices
Code	237
Status	Review
Legal	1. 24 P.S. 1317.1
Adopted	November 15, 2004

Purpose

The Bethlehem Area School District recognizes the importance of maintaining a focused and respectful educational environment. The use of electronic devices, including cell phones, during the school day can interfere with teaching and learning, contribute to social-emotional distraction, and present issues related to safety, equity, and academic integrity. This policy establishes expectations for the use of cell phones and similar electronic devices by students in Grades K-12.

Authority

The Board of School Directors authorizes the administration to implement and enforce restrictions on student possession and use of electronic devices. The Board's goals are:

1. Restrict the use of electronic devices in classrooms and common areas during the school day.
2. Promote student engagement, safety, and academic success by minimizing digital distractions and reinforcing boundaries around responsible technology use.

The Board further authorizes school administrators to enforce this policy as defined by the Framework for Citizenship and to provide accommodations for students with documented medical or special needs, or other pre-approved reasons.

This restriction is inclusive of prohibiting any device(s) that create disruption to the school environment upon arrival, dismissal, and transporting of students.

Definitions

Electronic Device - Any device not issued by the district that is capable of transmitting data, capturing still images or movies; any device that can record, store, display, transmit, edit or receive calls, texts, data, or images, audio or video, operate online applications; any device that can provide a connection to the internet (whether wireless or wired); laptops and tablet computers not issued by the district; electronic gaming systems; pagers; e-readers; and laser pointers. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, tablets, personal laptops, and earbuds not tethered to a district issued device.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations and building-level procedures to implement this policy consistently across the district. District administrators are responsible for ensuring all buildings implement electronic device procedures with consistency and fidelity. Building Principals are responsible for ensuring that their respective staff, students, and families are informed of the policy, and any administrative regulations by means of each school's student handbook, the district website, or other reasonable means of written communication, and that violations are addressed in accordance with district discipline procedures.

Teachers and staff are expected to support the enforcement of this policy and their buildings administrative regulations implementing this policy by maintaining consistent expectations in classrooms and throughout the school environment.

Procedures used in district schools and programs shall be evaluated and authorized on

1. Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent.
2. Building Principals.
3. Solicitor
4. Chief Technology Officer
5. Chief Pupil Services Officer
6. Supervisor of Professional Development and Technology Integration
7. Director of Student Services

Guidelines

Neither policy, nor any administrative regulation, shall apply in the following circumstances, provided that the building principal approves in advance, with the collaboration of the above referenced individuals.

- A student who is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance or rescue squad.
- A student who has a need for an electronic device due to a documented medical, behavioral, or disability-related need as outlined in a student's IEP, 504 Plan, Individual Health Plan, emergency medical plan or other pre-approved reason.
- Students may possess electronic devices, including cell phones, while on school property and during school-sponsored activities outside of instructional hours.
- The administration reserves the right to restrict cell phone use at their discretion during school-sponsored activities as needed.
- The administration reserves the right to approve cell phone use in unique situations approved in advance by the building administrator for special events, emergencies, or instructional purposes.

Loss or Damage to Electronic Devices:

Students are solely responsible for the safe storage of any electronic devices that they choose to bring to school. The district shall not be liable or responsible for the loss or damage to any electronic devices that a student brings to school, extracurricular activities, to school-sponsored events or trips, or from the confiscation of an electronic device as the result of a policy violation.

Student Responsibility for Data Charges:

No student shall be required to provide an electronic device as a condition of receiving educational instruction. If any student chooses to utilize such a device pursuant to this policy, the student and parents/guardians assume full responsibility for any phone or data charges that may result from such use.

Limitation on Technical Support:

District information technology staff may not provide technical assistance to students for their electronic devices. However, this policy shall not prohibit district information technology staff from providing general instructions for the configuration of such devices to access or connect to district-owned technology resources.

Penalties for Violations:

The Board authorizes building administrators, teachers, and security personnel to confiscate a student's electronic devices when used in violation of this policy. All confiscated electronic devices shall be delivered promptly to the building administrator's office. Confiscated devices shall be returned only to a parent/guardian for any offense.

Building administrators may impose additional disciplinary sanctions against students for violations of this policy, including suspensions from school or recommendations for expulsion from school as warranted by the specific facts and circumstances in a particular case per the Framework for Citizenship.