

ROCKWELL CHARTER SCHOOL

Personal Student Device Policy

Purpose

The Administration of the Rockwell Charter School recognizes that technology-supported learning can improve student outcomes and engagement in specific contexts, but not when it is overused, inappropriately used, or disconnected from learning. Research has shown that students' use of personal electronic devices such as cell phones, smartwatches at school has a negative effect on student academic performance and mental health.

In response to this research, Rockwell's Administration has adopted this policy to prohibit the use of personal devices by students during scheduled class time during the school day; to outline consequences for infractions; and to describe circumstances that may produce exemptions to prohibitions in this policy. This policy applies to students' use of personal devices while on school property during school hours and is applicable to all students at the school regardless of grade level.

Definitions

Bluetooth Headphones: Headphones that use a radio frequency to share data over a short distance, eliminating the need for wires, and can be used to share documents or connect with other Bluetooth enabled devices.

Cell Phone: A mobile device that is capable of making calls, sending text messages, accessing the internet, and running various applications.

Earbuds: Small electronic earphones used to listen privately to music, data, or similar from a computer, smartphone, or other personal electronic device.

Personal Electronic Device: A computer, smart phone, tablet, smart watch, or other similar device that is authorized to access data or is used to backup any such device and is owned by a student or a student's family. Any device that a student possesses which electronically communicates, sends, receives, stores, reproduces, or displays voice and/or text communication, media, or data. A personal device does *not* refer to a school-issued, school-owned device provided for student use for school-sanctioned educational purposes.

Smartwatch: A wearable technology device that functions as an extension of a cell phone or as a separate device that displays notifications, tracks health and fitness metrics, allows for messaging, or can make or receive phone calls.

Procedures for Personal Devices on Campus

The Administration prefers that students' personal electronic devices be left at home for the school day. However, students who bring a personal electronic device to school must adhere to the following procedures:

- A student's personal electronic device must remain powered off, stored away, and completely out of view at all times when a student is in a scheduled course or activity at the school.
- If a student carries a backpack, the student's personal electronic device must be placed in the backpack and completely out of view during classes and activities.
- If a student does not carry a backpack, the student's personal electronic device must be placed in a basket, box, or other holding place designated by the student's classroom teacher.
- Any personal electronic device in view during class or activities will be confiscated, logged, and securely held until the end of the school day, at which point the device can be collected by the student or parent depending on the number and nature of a student's infractions of this policy.
- Students may use personal devices during discretionary times or breaks on campus during the school day. These include lunch time, breaks between classes, and before or after school.

Consequences

Violation of this policy by any student will result in the following consequences:

- Upon the first infraction, a teacher will remind a student of the expectations and rules related to personal student devices.
- Upon the second infraction, a student's personal electronic device will be confiscated and stored in the Administrative Offices with an appropriate Administrator. The student will receive a lunch detention. The student may retrieve the device at the end of the day. A parent or guardian will be notified of the student's infraction.
- Upon the third infraction, a student's personal electronic device will be confiscated and stored in the Administrative Offices with an appropriate Administrator. The student will receive a suspension. A parent or guardian will be notified of the student's infraction and the imposed consequence. Only a parent or guardian may retrieve the device from an Administrator upon the student's third infraction.
- Upon the fourth infraction, a student's personal electronic device will be confiscated and stored in the Administrative Offices with an Administrator. The student will receive an out-of-school suspension, and a parent or guardian will be required to meet with the Administration prior to retrieving the student's personal electronic device. The student will no longer be allowed to bring a personal device to school.

- The Administration reserves the right to adjust these consequences according to the age and developmental level of individual students.

Exemptions

This policy does not prohibit a student from using a personal electronic device for purposes documented in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or other plan developed under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794. A student may be granted the use of a personal electronic device to monitor or address a health concern documented under an Individualized Health Plan (IHP). Other exceptions may be granted at the discretion of Administration. With all exemptions, appropriate school technology use policies and rules apply.

Liability for Personal Electronic Devices

If students and families make the decision to bring a personal electronic device to the school, they do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage caused to any personal electronic device while a student is at school or on the school's property.

Urgent Communication

The Administration understands that some parents prefer their children to have access to a personal electronic device, such as a cell phone, to communicate with them after school. Students may use cell phones during the after-school pick-up time.

If a parent, guardian, or caregiver needs to contact a child/student urgently during the school day, they should call the Front Office or communicate with the student's teacher through the teacher's official school email or ParentSquare. Parents, guardians, and caregivers should be advised that Front Office and teachers may not be immediately available to answer a phone call or email, but will respond within a reasonable period of time.

During a school emergency that requires communication, the school will engage in its emergency communication protocols to communicate critical information to all the school's stakeholders.

Non-Essential Communication

The Administration considers among other "non-essential" communication a student's need to communicate to a parent or guardian about something the student inadvertently left at home. The school supports students in developing important executive function skills, such as preparing for, planning, and organizing their days. An over-reliance on cell phone or smartwatch communication with parents or guardians hinders a student's development of these important skills.

Expectation of Parental Support

The Administration requests and expects parental involvement and support in the explanation and enforcement of this policy. The Administration acknowledges that consequences imposed on students as a result of infractions of this policy will be significantly more effective if parents, guardians, and administrators work collaboratively to support students' appropriate use of electronic devices and their guided participation in technology-supported learning.