

USE OF PERSONAL OWNED DEVICES (PODS) IN SCHOOLS

Background

The procedures have been updated to align with the Ministry of Education Order #14/2024, which establishes provincial standards for using personal mobile devices in schools.

Definition

Personal-owned devices include any electronic device that can be used to communicate or access the Internet, such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop, or smartwatch.

Procedures

1. The use of PODS is generally allowed in Division schools before and after instructional hours and during student breaks.
 - 1.1. Principals of K-6 schools may implement measures to prohibit grades K-6 students from using PODS during scheduled breaks.
 - 1.2. A principal may implement further restrictions if significant community support is demonstrated and with Superintendent approval.
2. Students and staff are responsible for the content of the data stored on their personal devices when using that personal device in a school.
3. Students must keep their PODS powered off and stored out of sight during regular instructional times or school-sponsored events, such as assemblies or guest speaker presentations.
4. The school principal or their designate may approve limited use of student PODS for health and medical reasons, to support unique learning needs, or for other educational purposes.
5. Students are not to take PODs into test or examination settings unless they have been given permission to do so.
6. PODS are not to be used in settings such as changing rooms, washrooms, private counseling rooms, or any situation that can potentially violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
7. Students are not permitted to use their PODS or any other recording devices to capture audio, video, or images of other students, teachers, or staff without their explicit consent. This rule does not apply to public events where attendees do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as sports events and graduation ceremonies.
8. Students who do not comply with these procedures will be subject to progressive disciplinary measures while remaining compliant with Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Discipline.
9. The Division assumes no responsibility for loss, repair, or replacement of PODS.

10. The Superintendent requires principals to:
 - 10.1. Ensure all school staff are familiar with these procedures and understand the principal's expectations for enforcement.
 - 10.2. Determine where students will store their PODS during class time (e.g., in a student's school bag, locker, desk, or a secure location such as a locked cupboard).
 - 10.3. Determine where PODS will be securely stored if confiscated during disciplinary action.
 - 10.4. Develop progressive disciplinary measures tailored to the school's student demographic. Such measures might include:

First Offense: The student is reminded of the expectations regarding the use of PODS.

Second Offense: The POD will be confiscated and securely stored until the end of the school day, at which point it will be returned to the student.

Third Offense: The POD will be confiscated and securely stored. A parent or guardian will be notified and required to retrieve the POD from the school.

Subsequent Offenses: The POD will be confiscated and securely stored. A parent or guardian will be notified and required to retrieve the POD from the school. Additionally, the student will receive an in-school or out-of-school suspension.
 - 10.5. Annually communicate this administrative procedure, school-specific progressive disciplinary measures, and the preferred method for parents/guardians to communicate with their children during instruction to both students and parents.
11. Staff who bring PODS to school shall comply with Administrative Procedure 140 – Responsible Network Use, Administrative Procedure 141 – Information Security and Administrative Procedure 142 – Network Security.
12. If anyone brings a POD to school or work, it is reasonable to assume that the device can support school or work (e.g., for multifactor authentication).

Adopted/Revised/Updated: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/AUG 2024

Reference: Section 31, 33, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act, Ministerial Order (#014/2024)