

# Public Schools Branch

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

PERSONALLY-OWNED MOBILE DEVICES IN SCHOOLS	
<i>Policy Section</i> <b>General Administration</b>	<i>Procedure Number</i> <b>106.1</b>
<i>Pages</i> <b>3</b>	<i>Approved Date</i> <b>September 4, 2025</b>
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### 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide a focused and distraction-free learning environment and to ensure that all students, staff, and parents/guardians understand and comply with the procedure to limit access to Personally-Owned Mobile Devices (PMDs) in schools. This includes objectives such as reducing distractions, improving student mental health, and mitigating risks of cyberbullying to foster a safe and productive educational environment.
- 1.2 The procedure promotes responsible use of technology and supports academic success by fostering a consistent approach to managing PMDs, creating a productive and safe learning environment for all.
- 1.3 This procedure aligns with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly ensuring children's rights to education, privacy and protection from harm.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Personally-Owned Mobile Device (PMD) – a personal mobile device that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit, or receive digital information, and for greater clarity could include a smartphone, tablet, laptop or smartwatch.

### 3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Principal: Ensure that the procedure is communicated to students, staff, and parents/guardians, and oversee its enforcement.
- 3.2 Educators: Reinforce the procedure within the classroom, manage storage options for PMD, and handle exceptions as needed.
- 3.3 Staff: Model expectations for PMD use in accordance with digital citizenship principles.
- 3.4 Students: Adhere to the procedure, store devices as required and understand the consequences of misuse.
- 3.5 Parents/Guardians: Support the procedure by reinforcing expectations at home and cooperating with the school in case of non-compliance.

### 4.0 USE AND STORAGE

- 4.1 The principal of a school may permit students to bring a PMD to school, in accordance with the Minister's Directive, *Responsible Use of Communication and Information Technology*.
- 4.2 Students are only permitted to use PMD during instructional time in accordance with the exceptions in section 6.0
- 4.3 Students in grades K to 6 must store all such devices out of view, where they are not a distraction, either powered off or set to silent mode for the duration of the school day.
- 4.4 Students in grades 7 to 12 must store all such devices out of view, where they are not a distraction, either powered off or set to silent mode for the duration of instructional time.
- 4.5 Students can store their PMD in a location outside the classroom that they deem safe.
- 4.6 Educators may provide a designated area within the classroom for students to store their devices, ensuring they remain out of view and are not a distraction.

## **5.0 STAFF USE, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

- 5.1 It is important for adults in the school to model responsible and professional use of personal mobile devices (PMDs). Staff should limit personal use of mobile devices during instructional time, supervision, and when students are present, to ensure full engagement and presence.
- 5.2 PMDs should only be used for work-related purposes when required (e.g., communication, emergencies, etc.), and only if no other school-provided communication tools (such as walkie-talkies or landlines) are available.
- 5.3 All staff, including substitutes, should be made aware of the school's expectations regarding appropriate use of PMDs. Principals may clarify school-specific guidelines, including the use of PMDs for specific work tasks.
- 5.4 In addition, educators are encouraged to incorporate digital literacy and online safety into instruction to support students in becoming responsible digital citizens.
- 5.5 Schools must ensure students are frequently reminded of the expectations, particularly at the beginning of each school year. It is important for students to understand that the limited use of PMD is to ensure a learning environment with minimal distractions.
- 5.6 Parents/Guardians should also be regularly informed to ensure they are aware and can support this direction.

## **6.0 EXCEPTIONS**

- 6.1 Students must only use their PMD during instructional time as permitted by an educator for educational purposes, health and medical purposes, translation purposes to support EAL/FAL students, or in support of special education needs. Any exception must be brought to the attention of the educator or principal by the parent or student to consider, prior to the student's use of the PMD.

## **7.0 RESULT OF MISUSE**

- 7.1 When the direction for using a PMD is not followed:
  - a) The student will be reminded of the direction and the reasons behind it. The student is asked to store their PMD in accordance with section 4.0.
  - b) If reminders do not result in proper and consistent use of the PMD, the student must surrender the device to the educator for the remainder of the instructional class or

day. The PMD must be securely stored in an area designated by the educator until it is returned to the student and/or parent/guardian.

- c) If the student refuses to comply, the parent/guardian will be contacted. The school administration may require the student to surrender the PMD, which will be securely held in the office for pickup by the student or parent/guardian at the end of the school day.
- d) If refusal continues, the school administration will be notified and will implement progressive discipline, in accordance with the Safe and Caring Learning Environments policy and procedure. This may include measures such as detention, loss of privileges, parent/guardian meetings and ultimately, suspension.

## 8.0 SECURITY AND PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Students are responsible for the security, care, and maintenance of any PMD that is used in school.
- 8.2 Although the school may confiscate a PMD for disciplinary reasons, the school or the PSB assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair, or replacement of a PMD, except in the case of gross negligence by a staff member.
- 8.3 While at school, on a school bus or during an extracurricular activity, students must not take or send videos or pictures of students, school staff, or visitors with their PMD. A supervising educator must give permission to a student for any occasion that a student wishes to create an audio or video recording for educational purposes.
- 8.4 Students must not use a PMD in areas where there is an increased expectation of privacy, such as changing rooms and washrooms.
- 8.5 Students are encouraged to secure their PMD with passwords or other security measures to protect their information and prevent unauthorized use.
- 8.6 If a student feels they have been a victim of cyberbullying or invasion of privacy and needs support, they should reach out to a trusted adult (at home, at school, to a community partner or online through *Report It!*). For more information about reporting an incident, see the PSB [Report It! Campaign](#).

## 9.0 CROSS REFERENCES

- 9.1 [Minister's Directive, Responsible Use of Communication and Information Technology](#)
- 9.2 [Digital Citizenship and Technology in Schools Policy 104](#)
- 9.3 [Social Media and Digital Messaging Guideline 105.1](#)
- 9.4 [Safe and Caring Learning Environments Policy and Procedure 605 & 605.1](#)
- 9.5 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly Articles 16, 28, and 29

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