

Public Schools Branch

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

Personally-Owned Mobile Devices in Schools

CONSULTATION WORKING DRAFT

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.
- 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.

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 Students: Adhere to the procedure, store devices as required, and understand the consequences of misuse.
- 3.4 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 under the following conditions:
 - a) As directed by an educator for educational purposes.
 - b) For health and medical purposes.
 - c) In support of special education needs.
- 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.
- 4.7 All PMD must remain turned off or set to silent mode throughout the day, except when in use under the conditions specified in section 4.2.

5.0 Education and Awareness

- 5.1 It is important for the adults in the school to model the behaviours and expectations related to the use of PMD in schools.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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, for health and medical purposes, or in support of special education needs. Any exception must be brought to the attention of the educator or principal 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 will be stored in an area designated by the educator.
 - 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 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 While at school or on a school bus, 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.

- 8.3 Students must not use a PMD, in areas where there is an increased expectation of privacy, such as change rooms and washrooms.
- 8.4 Students are encouraged to secure their PMD with passwords or other security measures to protect their information and prevent unauthorized use.

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](#)

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