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**HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION**

**POLICY HANDBOOK**

**Policy Code:**

IGB

**Policy Title:**

Personal Digital Devices

**Cross Reference:**

Policy HG: Citizenship in a Digital Age, IFGA Search and Seizure, IG: Student Discipline, IGD suspension and expulsion

**Legal Reference:**

**Adoption Date:**

May 28, 2024

**Re-Affirmation or**

**Amendment Date:**

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## **POLICY**

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION BELIEVES THAT PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES OFFER POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION ACCESS AND ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING, BUT THAT RESTRICTED USE OF PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES IN SCHOOLS AND THE DIVISION IS REQUIRED, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES TO ENSURE THE PROMOTION OF CARING AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS. AS SUCH, THE BOARD EXPECTS SCHOOLS TO IMPLEMENT SCHOOL BASED PRACTICES TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE USE OF PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES SO THAT PRACTICES CONTRIBUTES TO THE ONLINE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF STUDENTS AND STAFF, MINIMIZED RISK TO PERSONAL WELLBEING, ENHANCE FOCUSED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.

## **DEFINITION**

**Instructional Time:** includes all time during a scheduled period where students are in the classroom, or time outside the classroom where teachers take responsibility for ensuring that learning activities for students are directed toward achieving the outcomes of approved programs of study and instructional support plans.

**Non-instructional time:** Includes time during the school day where students are not scheduled to be with a teacher. This includes before and after school, breaks, and lunch.

**Personal Digital Devices:** means any personal electronic devices that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, a cellular network, or other devices, such as a cell phone, computer, tablet, gaming device, electronic toy, or smart watch.

## **GUIDELINES:**

1. Schools have the right and authority to temporarily confiscate, restrict and/or prohibit cell phone usage while individuals are on school property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities.

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- 1.1. Schools are encouraged to, at minimum, put in place restrictions that require students to keep their phones on silent and out of sight for the entire day for kindergarten to Grade 8 classrooms.
- 1.2. Confiscation, restrictions and/or prohibition may extend to
  - 1.2.1. students and/or staff;
  - 1.2.2. instructional time;
  - 1.2.3. non-instructional times;
  - 1.2.4. periods of time students are being transported; and/or
  - 1.2.5. time staff are working
  - 1.2.6. specific locations within the building or on school property.
- 1.3. Schools should take into consideration the following when deciding on restrictions and/or prohibition;
  - 1.3.1. the student population at the school (e.g. student’s age and developmental stage);  
and
  - 1.3.2. expectations at the end of a class when students are done early as this can be a problematic time that should be monitored.
2. Schools shall provide notice to staff, students and parents that use of personal digital devices may be banned and/or restricted, including what those bans/restrictions are and shall communicate the possibility of the imposition of disciplinary action by the school or criminal penalties if the device is used in a criminal act.
3. Schools administrative procedures may include guidelines for parent/staff, staff/student, and staff/staff communication both during and after the school day, such as
  - 3.1. reasonable response timeframes
  - 3.2. evening, weekend, and holiday response expectations
  - 3.3. professionalism, and appropriateness of communication

## **REGULATIONS**

1. Each school shall adopt administrative procedures governing the acceptable use of personal digital devices while individuals or on school property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities. School administrative procedures shall include:
  - 1.1. Clear expectations and consequences regarding inappropriate use such as temporary

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confiscation and permanent loss of the privilege of having the device on school premises.

1.1.1. Consequences may include:

1.1.1.1. asked to put away;

1.1.1.2. conversation with student and/or parent;

1.1.1.3. temporary confiscation, where student or parent may pick up later; and/or

1.1.1.4. prohibition.

1.1.2. School administrative procedures must be published appropriately so that all stakeholders are aware.

1.2. When restrictions and/or prohibitions are in place, schools administrative procedures shall include:

1.2.1. expectations regarding storage of the personal digital device (e.g. location, whether in silent mode).

1.2.1.1. Schools are expected to communicate that the security and storage of these items is the sole responsibility of the owner/user and that notwithstanding confiscation for the purpose of discipline, the division assumes no responsibility for the safety, security, loss, repair, or replacement of such items.

1.2.1.2. When temporarily confiscated from students by staff, devices must be securely stored.

1.3. That personal digital devices are prohibited:

1.3.1. from being used in bathrooms and changerooms.

1.3.2. during test or examination settings, unless students have been given permission to do so by the teacher administering the test or exam

1.4. That sharing and recording videos and/or photos of individuals without explicit consent is prohibited, with the exception of photos and recordings made at public events located on school property.

1.5. Accommodations for the usage of personal digital devices during instructional time for the following reasons:

1.5.1. for educational purposes, including digital literacy, as directed and/or approved by the teacher in the classroom;

1.5.2. to support, monitor, or regulate an identified health and/or medical condition as per

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their medical plan;

1.5.3. to support an identified inclusive educational need (accessibility and accommodation need), including mental health need as per their individual support plan; and/or

1.5.4. emergencies whether real or practice.

2. The principal may authorize any specific use of a personal digital device during the school day.