

USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Brunswick School Board seeks to prevent the potential for abuse and the disruption of the academic environment while also allowing for the flexibility to capitalize on the value of personal electronic devices. To this end, the use or possession of personal electronic devices is prohibited in Brunswick schools during instructional times. This applies to the broad array of personal electronic devices which includes (but is not limited to) cellular phones, pagers, personal digital assistants, pocket PCs, digital cameras and personal entertainment devices. These devices are permitted for use in academic pursuits where required by curriculum or specific student learning accommodations and administrative teams may make exceptions to this policy where it is in the mutual best interest of the student and school. In all cases the Brunswick School Department will not accept responsibility for any lost, stolen, or damaged devices or equipment.

Background

Personal electronic devices (including communication, productivity and entertainment devices) have become widely available in a variety of forms, definitions and sizes. With rapid advances in technology and the recent trend toward creating hybrid devices, it is not possible to define each specific device in the context of policy. Many school age children and young adults use these devices daily for school, work and play. While there are many benefits to these personal electronic devices, there is also potential for abuse and financial loss.

At their best. The availability of this technology creates a tremendous opportunity for enhancing learning when used as part of approved curriculum. Personal productivity devices can be used to assist students in developing and following schedules and familiarity with such devices may assist these students in transitioning to various work environments after school. Such personal communications devices can provide additional lines of communication between parents and students and can enable communications that enhance the student's personal security.

At their worst. Personal entertainment devices can create a distraction in classrooms and school spaces. The potential for loss or theft of devices creates a financial liability for families providing their children with these devices. Personal productivity and communication devices have proven to be tools used to inappropriately share information in school (i.e., cheat). With their ease in capturing images and sending information or posting to the internet, some communication devices have been used in incidents of harassment and intimidation between students.

When administrative teams determine that an exception to this policy is warranted, they will establish procedures that are specific to their schools. These procedures should provide clear guidelines for the appropriate use of electronic devices that minimize the potential for misuse in the school environment. These procedures should be published in student handbooks and disseminated by any other appropriate means.

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