"A CARING SCHOOL COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE"

CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION FAMILY INTEGRITY PERSEVERANCE RESPECT TRUST

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MARANACOOK COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

August 12, 2026 @ 6:30 p.m.

AGENDA

ZOOM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Local School Committees: Peter Felmly, Drummond Woodsum**
4. **Strategic Planning Update: Superintendent Smith**
5. **Discussion: Board Meeting Calendar & Subcommittee Membership**
6. **Action Item:**
   a. **Policy JICJ Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in School***
      i. **Policy Minutes 7/27***
7. **Citizens' Comment**
8. **Adjournment**

***Attachments**

(Link to Board Private Shared Drive)

Any citizen who wishes to add an item to the agenda may do so by notifying the Board Chair or the Superintendent's Office, in writing, ten days prior to the Board's next scheduled meeting.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 38

CELL PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN SCHOOLS

This policy supports a focused learning environment, minimizes distractions, and promotes student social and emotional well-being by setting expectations for the use of student personal cell phones, smartwatches, and other personal electronic devices (PEDs) during the school day.

This policy applies to all student personal electronic devices with Internet or cellular network connectivity capabilities, wearable or handheld.

PROHIBITION ON USE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

All students, from Pre-K through Grade 12, are prohibited from using cell phones and other personal electronic devices with Internet or cellular network connectivity capabilities for the duration of the entire school day, except as otherwise permitted in this policy. For purposes of this policy, the school day begins when a student enters the school building upon arrival and ends when the student exits the building at dismissal.

Students are not permitted to carry, wear, or access personal cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs during the school day.

- Upon entering the school building at arrival, cell phones and other PEDs must be powered off, must remain off, and must be stored as determined by the building administrator.
- Exceptions to the prohibition on use may be granted for monitoring or management of a health condition in accordance with a health care provider's order as incorporated into the student's individual health plan (IHP) (e.g., glucose monitoring); implementation of a student's IEP; a documented Section 504 accommodation for an individual student (e.g., use of assistive technology); in language support services for emergent English language learners when no other translation option is reasonably available; or in an emergency as authorized by the building administrator in accordance with the District's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan.

At all grade levels, violations of this policy may result in:

- A verbal warning and direction to store the device in the designated location.
- Confiscation of the cell phone, smart watch, or other device for the remainder of the day.
- Repeated violations may require a parent/guardian meeting and/or result in additional interventions or disciplinary consequences.

In the event of a school emergency, the District will communicate with parents as promptly as possible in accordance with the District's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan.

The District will not be responsible for loss, theft, or damage to students' personally owned cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs brought into schools or onto school property, including school buses, parking lots, athletic fields, and/or any other school facilities.

The Superintendent and building administrators will be responsible for developing and implementing procedures to enforce this policy. Students and parents will be provided notice of this policy through student handbooks and/or other means of communication before the beginning of the school year.

Legal Reference:
20-A MRSA § 1001(23)

Cross Reference:
JICJ-R – Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools – Procedures
GBCC – Employee Use of Cell Phones
IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety
JIC – Student Code of Conduct
JIH – Questioning and Searches of Students

Adopted: _____

DRAFT

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 38

CELL PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN SCHOOLS — PROCEDURES

1. Purpose and Scope

These procedures implement Policy JICJ (Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools). They apply to all RSU 38 students, Pre-K through Grade 12, and to all personal electronic devices (PEDs) with Internet or cellular network connectivity capabilities, whether handheld or wearable. Examples include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, fitness trackers with connectivity, tablets, handheld gaming devices with connectivity, and personal laptops not issued by the District.

Wireless earbuds and headphones are permitted when connected to a District-issued device for educational or school-related purposes.

These procedures do **not** apply to District-issued devices (e.g., MacBooks, iPads) used in accordance with Policy IJNDB.

2. Definition of "School Day."

For purposes of this prohibition, the school day begins when a student enters the school building upon arrival and ends when the student exits the building at dismissal. The school day **includes**:

- Passing periods before school and between classes;
- Lunch periods;
- Study halls, advisee time, and resource periods;
- Recess and outdoor breaks;
- Assemblies and school-sponsored activities held during the school day; and
- Field trips that take place during the school day.

The prohibition on device use does **not** apply to morning bus transportation before a student enters the building, afternoon bus transportation after a student exits the building at dismissal, or before- and after-school extracurricular activities, athletic practices and contests, and events, except where a coach, advisor, or activity supervisor establishes additional restrictions.

3. Storage Requirements and Access to Use

Upon entering the school building at arrival, all PEDs must be powered off and stored in a designated storage container, or in another location designated by the principal, and retrieved at dismissal. Devices may not be carried during the school day. Each building principal will publish the specific storage location for the building.

Storage methods will be communicated to families in writing through the building handbook and a start-of-year notification, and will be posted in classrooms and on the District website.

Note: Smartwatches must be powered off and stored in the designated storage location along with the student's other devices. Because a smartwatch can continue to receive notifications even when a paired phone is powered off, smartwatches may not be worn or carried during the school day.

DRAFT

4. Exceptions

Exceptions to the prohibition on use may be granted only in the circumstances listed below. Except for emergencies, a written exception must be on file with the building principal before the device may be used during the school day.

4.1 Health-related use.

Use of a PED to monitor or manage a documented health condition (e.g., a continuous glucose monitor or a seizure-detection app) is permitted when authorized by a health care provider and incorporated into the student's Individual Health Plan (IHP) by the school nurse. The IHP must specify the device, the function authorized, and any conditions on use.

4.2 Special education and Section 504.

Use of a PED is permitted where required by a student's IEP or by a documented Section 504 accommodation. The Director of Special Services and the building principal will ensure that the IEP or 504 plan specifies the device, the function authorized, and any conditions on use.

4.3 Emergent English language learners.

Use of a translation function on a PED is permitted for an emergent English language learner when no other translation option is reasonably available. The ESL coordinator and building principal will document the authorization and review it at least annually.

4.4 Emergency authorization.

In an emergency, the building administrator (or designee) may authorize a student or students to use a PED on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the District's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan. Standing emergency authorizations will not be granted.

4.5 Instructional override removed.

Teachers and other staff **may not** authorize student use of a personal device for an instructional task during the school day. Instructional needs requiring connected devices must be met using District-issued devices. When a student's team determines that a student needs access to a connected device, the school will work to provide a District-issued device when one is available.

5. Photography and Recording

The use of cameras, or the camera or video function, on PEDs is strictly prohibited at all times in locker rooms, restrooms, classrooms, health offices, and other places where privacy is generally expected. At before- or after-school activities, athletic events, or other school-sponsored events where device use is otherwise permitted, students must obtain permission before photographing, recording, or live-streaming any individual.

6. Parent and Student Communication During the School Day

Parents and guardians who need to reach a student during the school day should call the student's school's main office. Office staff will deliver messages and, where appropriate, arrange for the student to return the call. Parents and guardians should **not** call or text the student's device during the school day.

Students who need to reach a parent or guardian during the school day should request use of an office or classroom phone.

DRAFT

7. Search of Devices

Student devices may be subject to search, consistent with Policy JIH (Questioning and Searches of Students), when there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated Board policy, District procedures, or school rules, or engaged in other misconduct. Administrators may retain a confiscated device for as long as necessary to complete an investigation, including consultation with law enforcement where applicable.

8. Violations and Consequences

Violations of Policy JICJ and these procedures will be addressed using the following progression, except that more serious violations may result in advanced consequences without prior steps. The Principal retains discretion based on the severity of the violation, the student's disciplinary record, and the totality of the circumstances.

8.1. First offense: Verbal warning and direction to power off and store the device in the main office. The incident is documented in the student information system.

8.2. Second offense: Confiscation of the device for the remainder of the school day. The student may retrieve the device from the main office at dismissal. Parent/guardian is notified.

8.3. Third offense: Confiscation of the device. A parent/guardian must come to the school to retrieve the device and meet with an administrator. A device-management plan may be put in place.

8.4. Subsequent or serious offenses: Additional interventions and disciplinary consequences consistent with the Student Code of Conduct (Policy JIC) and Policy JICJ, including detention, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. Conduct that violates other Board policies (e.g., harassment, bullying, academic dishonesty) will be addressed under those policies in addition to this one.

8.5. Refusal to surrender a device: Refusal to surrender a device upon staff request is insubordination and will be addressed under the Student Code of Conduct. Staff will not engage in a physical confrontation to obtain a device; the matter will be referred to administration.

9. School Emergencies

In the event of a school emergency, the District will communicate with parents and guardians as promptly as possible in accordance with the District's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan, using Thrillshare, social media, email, the District website, and other channels as appropriate. Families are reminded that student use of personal devices during an emergency can compromise staff communication with first responders, contribute to misinformation, and place students at risk; the most reliable information will come from official District channels.

10. Loss, Theft, and Damage

The District is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to students' personally owned cell phones, smartwatches, or other PEDs brought into schools or onto school property, including school buses, parking lots, athletic fields, or any other school facilities.

11. Staff Responsibilities

- **Building principals** will publish the building storage location, ensure that staff and students are trained on this policy at the start of each year, oversee consistent enforcement, and identify students with Section 504 or Individual Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP) exceptions and ensure documentation is on file.

DRAFT

- **Teachers and other staff** will ensure student compliance, direct students to power off and store devices, and refer repeated or serious violations to administration.
- **The school nurse** will identify students with health-related exceptions and ensure the IHP is on file.
- **The Director of Special Services** will identify students with IEP-based exceptions and ensure documentation is on file.
- **Office staff** will receive and securely store confiscated devices, document violations in the student information system, and facilitate parent-student communication during the school day.

12. Notice and Annual Review
This procedure and the underlying policy will be communicated to students and parents through the student handbook, an annual start-of-year notification, and the District website. The Administrative Team will review these procedures annually and recommend revisions to the Board as needed.

Cross References:
Policy JICJ – Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools

Policy JIC – Student Code of Conduct

Policy JIH – Questioning and Searches of Students

Policy JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention in Schools

Policy IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety

Policy GBCC – Employee Use of Cell Phones

RSU 38 Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan

Legal Reference:
20-A MRSA § 1001(23)

History:
Original procedure adopted: 08/03/16

Proposed revision: 07/22/26

Policy Committee: 07/27/26

DRAFT

WENDY BROTHERLIN
PATRICIA CLARK
KRISTIN DUBOIS
NOAH EASTER
ANDREW GORRILL
DAVID GUILLEMETTE
CHAD WIGHT

DANIEL HOLAMN
CHIP JONES
LESLIE MARCO
BRIAN TARBUCK
DAVID TWITCHELL

Policy Committee Meeting Agenda
July 27, 2026
9:00-10:00 a.m. at Central Office

Board Members: Wendy Brotherlin, Daniel Holman, Leslie Marco

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Karen G. Smith, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Lake

Policies to Review/Adopt: JICJ- Student Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Purpose of Meeting

The Committee met to review the draft of Policy JICJ (Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices in Schools) and its accompanying administrative procedure, JICJ-R, both dated July 22, 2026, in advance of recommending action to the full Board. The Superintendent reported that the Administrative Team devoted significant time during the week of July 20 to finalizing both documents together, working to ensure the policy and procedure are consistent with one another and that all six District buildings operate under the same expectations.

Review of Policy JICJ

The Committee reviewed Policy JICJ and discussed the following:

- ***Scope and purpose.*** The policy establishes a full-school-day prohibition on student use of personal cell phones, smartwatches, and other internet- or cellular-connected devices, Pre-K through Grade 12, to support a focused learning environment and student well-being.
- ***Definition of the school day.*** The prohibition runs from the moment a student enters the building at arrival until the student exits at dismissal. The Committee discussed the decision to move away from "bell-to-bell" language, since bell systems vary from building to building; the arrival-to-dismissal definition is clearer and can be enforced consistently across the District.
- ***Storage.*** Devices must be powered off and stored as determined by the building administrator upon arrival, and may not be carried, worn, or accessed during the school day.
- ***Exceptions***. Discussed the limited exceptions for documented health conditions (IHP), IEP requirements, Section 504 accommodations, translation support for emergent English learners, and administrator-authorized emergencies.
- ***Consequences and liability.*** Reviewed the tiered response to violations and the provision that the District is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to personal devices.

Review of Procedure JICJ-R

The Committee reviewed the administrative procedure JICJ-R, which implements the policy, and discussed the following points:

WENDY BROTHERLIN
PATRICIA CLARK
KRISTIN DUBOIS
NOAH EASTER
ANDREW GORRILL
DAVID GUILLEMETTE
CHAD WIGHT

DANIEL HOLAMN
CHIP JONES
LESLIE MARCO
BRIAN TARBUCK
DAVID TWITCHELL

- ***School day, in detail.*** The procedure specifies that the prohibition covers passing periods, lunch, study halls, advisee/resource time, recess, assemblies, and daytime field trips, and that it does not extend to morning or afternoon bus transportation or before- and after-school activities unless a coach or advisor sets additional restrictions.
- ***Uniform storage across buildings.*** Storage requirements are written once and applied the same way in all six buildings, with each principal publishing the specific storage location for that building.
- ***Smartwatches and earbuds.*** Smartwatches must be powered off and stored with the student's other devices, since a watch can continue to receive notifications even when a paired phone is off. Wireless earbuds and headphones remain permitted when connected to a District-issued device for school purposes.
- ***Removal of instructional override.*** The Committee discussed the Team's decision that staff may not authorize personal devices for instructional tasks; instructional needs requiring connected devices will be met with District-issued devices.
- ***Exceptions process.*** Except in emergencies, a written exception must be on file with the building principal before a device may be used, with defined responsibilities for the nurse, Director of Special Services, ESL coordinator, and principal.
- ***Photography, searches, and communication.*** Reviewed the prohibition on camera use in areas where privacy is expected, the alignment of device searches with Policy JIH, and the procedures for parent-student communication through the main office during the school day.
- ***Consequences.*** Reviewed the progression from a verbal warning through confiscation, a required parent meeting, and referral to the Student Code of Conduct, with principal discretion for more serious violations.
- ***Emergency communication.*** Confirmed that both documents direct families to the District's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan and official District channels.

Recommended Action

- The Policy Committee recommends that Policy JICJ and Procedure JICJ-R (drafts dated July 22, 2026) be forwarded to the full Board for approval, so that the policy is in place for the start of the 2026–27 school year.
- Communicate the adopted policy to students and families through building handbooks, a start-of-year notification, and the District website prior to the first day of school.