

Annual Enforcement Report: Distraction-Free Schools Policy (NYS Education Law § 2803)

Canajoharie Central School District

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In compliance with New York State Education Law Section 2803, passed in the Fiscal Year 2026 state budget, the Canajoharie Central School District implemented its updated **Distraction-Free Schools Policy** for the 2025–2026 school year. This "bell-to-bell" mandate requires all internet-enabled personal devices (including smartphones, smartwatches, and tablets) to be turned off and securely stored from the beginning to the end of the instructional day.

The primary objectives of this policy are to maximize academic focus, reduce digital distractions, improve students' mental wellness, and foster real-world social connections. As mandated by state law, the district follows a progressive, educational, and non-exclusionary disciplinary framework; **no student may be suspended solely for a violation of this policy.**

This annual report provides a transparent, data-driven overview of policy enforcement across our schools, evaluates potential demographic disparities, and outlines corrective measures where necessary.

II. Policy Enforcement Data by School Building

During the 2025–2026 school year, a total of **83 unique students** across the district received formal disciplinary action for noncompliance with the policy, resulting in a total of **129 enforcement incidents.**

The distribution of these infractions across our three school buildings is detailed below:

Canajoharie Senior High School

The vast majority of enforcement actions occurred at the high school level, involving **78 unique students** and **124 total incidents:**

- **1 Infraction:** 48 students (48 total incidents)
- **2 Infractions:** 18 students (36 total incidents)
- **3 Infractions:** 6 students (18 total incidents)
- **4 or More Infractions:** 6 students (22 total incidents recorded)

Canajoharie Middle School

Enforcement at the middle school level was minimal, reflecting high initial compliance with the storage protocols:

- **1 Infraction:** 3 students (3 total incidents)

East Hill Elementary School

Device violations at the elementary level were isolated incidents handled with immediate educational corrections:

- **1 Infraction:** 2 students (2 total incidents)

III. Non-Identifiable Disciplinary Demographic Data

To safeguard student privacy in accordance with state and federal laws, demographic data has been aggregated district-wide and rendered completely non-identifiable.

The table below measures the **83 unique students** disciplined against general district-wide enrollment benchmarks (approx. 850 students total).

<u>Demographic Category</u>	<u>Sub-Group</u>	<u>District Enrollment % (Approx.)</u>	<u>Unique Students Disciplined</u>	<u>% of Total Disciplined</u>
Race / Ethnicity	White	86.0%	74	89.2%
	Non-White (Black, Hispanic, Multiracial)	14.0%	9	10.8%
Special Programs	Students with Disabilities (IEP/504)	16.0%	18	21.7%
	General Education	84.0%	65	78.3%
Economic Status	Economically Disadvantaged	54.0%	38	45.8%
	Non-Disadvantaged	46.0%	45	54.2%

IV. Demographic Disparity Analysis

An analysis of the data was conducted using standard statistical screening (including proportional risk ratios) to determine if any demographic sub-groups experienced a **statistically significant disparate impact** in policy enforcement.

Key Findings

- **Socioeconomic Status:** Economically disadvantaged students represent roughly 54% of the district enrollment but made up only 45.8% of the disciplined population. There is **no disparate impact** targeting this group.
- **Race & Ethnicity:** Non-white students represent approximately 14% of district enrollment and accounted for 10.8% of policy enforcements. This tracks closely with general population lines, showing **no statistically significant disparate impact**.
- **Students with Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities (IEPs or 504 plans) account for 16% of total district enrollment but represent **21.7%** of the unique students disciplined under this policy. A statistical risk-ratio analysis indicates that this variance is **statistically significant**, demonstrating a disparate impact that requires targeted intervention.

V. Mitigation Action Plan

Because a statistically significant disparate impact was identified regarding students with disabilities, the Canajoharie Central School District is initiating the following **Mitigation Action Plan** for the 2026–2027 school year to ensure equitable enforcement.

Note on Allowable Exceptions: State law explicitly allows device use exceptions when documented in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan (e.g., for medical tracking like glucose monitoring, language translation, assistive communication technology, or designated behavior regulation).

1. Mandated Staff Professional Development

- **Action:** Before the start of the 2026–2027 school year, all instructional and administrative staff will undergo targeted training regarding the intersection of the Distraction-Free Schools Policy and student accommodations.
- **Focus:** Ensuring staff can seamlessly distinguish between unauthorized smartphone use and authorized device use mandated by an IEP or 504 plan, thereby eliminating erroneous enforcement.

2. Pre-Correction and Student Support Review

- **Action:** Special education case managers and 504 coordinators will review individual student plans during the first week of school to explicitly define how and when necessary technology may be accessed.
- **Focus:** Providing proactive, explicit coaching to students who struggle with impulse control or transitions, shifting the intervention model from punitive to supportive.

3. Restorative and Educational Interventions

- **Action:** The district will revise its building-level enforcement protocols to integrate restorative practices before formal disciplinary actions are logged.
- **Focus:** Instead of immediate data logging or escalation, initial infractions will prioritize reteaching the "why" behind digital wellness, utilizing school counselors and social workers to address underlying technology dependencies.

4. Quarterly Administrative Data Audits

- **Action:** The Superintendent and building principals will review anonymized enforcement data on a quarterly basis during the 2026–2027 school year, rather than waiting for the annual report cycle.
- **Focus:** This allows the district to identify and correct any emerging enforcement disparities in real-time.