

Tahlequah Public Schools promotes an environment for instructional learning that is safe and secure. Therefore, in order to foster digital citizenship, students are urged to practice mature and responsible cell phone and personal electronic device usage.

It is the policy of the Board of Education that a student may possess a cell phone or personal electronic wireless communications device while on school premises, while in transit under the authority of the school, or while attending any function sponsored or authorized by the school upon consent of both the student's parent or guardian, and the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. Students may be issued a device by the school district such as a laptop, tablet, or other electronic device. School-issued devices or school-approved devices are exempt from the requirements of this policy and shall be utilized only for educational purposes by students.

Students are prohibited from utilizing cell phones and personal electronic devices while on the campus of a public school district from bell to bell. Cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and not be visible. Smart Watches must be on Do Not Disturb and not be used to communicate, record, or video at any time. Exceptions may be made as follows:

1. Emergency use of cell phones or personal electronic devices by students during the school day. Emergency use includes situations where immediate communication is needed for safety or urgent personal matters. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Medical Emergencies – Calling 911 or a parent if a student or someone nearby is having a severe health crisis (e.g., asthma attack, allergic reaction, seizure).; or
 - b. Natural Disasters or Lockdowns – Communicating with law enforcement or family during events like tornados, fires, lockdowns, or other emergencies affecting the school; or
2. Use of cell phones or personal electronic devices by students who use them to monitor health issues. This includes, but is not limited to, glucose monitoring which may occur multiple times during the school day; or
3. Students with special needs may use cell phones or personal electronic devices during class time or during the school day if their IEP, Medical Plan, or 504 Plan explicitly requires it as assistive technology for medically or educationally necessary purposes. To qualify for this exception, the use must be listed as a documented accommodation necessary for instruction or communication within the student's IEP, Medical Plan, or 504 Plan.
4. Administrative permission at a designated place to contact parents.

“Bell to bell” means the time between the first bell, or scheduled beginning of the day if bells are not used, ringing at the start of the school day to begin instructional time until the dismissal bell, or scheduled end of the day if bells are not used, at the end of the school day to end instructional time.

“Personal electronic device” means a personal device capable of connecting to a smart phone, the Internet, or a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly connecting to another similar device. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, smart watches, smart headphones, laptops, tablets, and smart glasses. Personal electronic devices shall not include school-issued or school-approved devices that are specifically limited to classroom instruction.

Students are responsible for the devices they bring to school. The district will not be responsible for the loss, theft, or destruction of devices brought onto school property or to school-sponsored events.

Students will not send, share, view, or possess pictures, text messages, emails, or other material depicting sexually explicit conduct in electronic or any other form on a cell phone or other electronic device while the student is on school grounds, on school buses or vehicles provided by the district, or at school-sponsored events.

Students found to be in possession of or using a cell phone or personal electronic wireless telecommunications device in violation of the policies shall be subject to disciplinary action under the student discipline policy. School personnel shall have the authority to detain and search any student upon the reasonable suspicion that the student is misusing the wireless communication device. School personnel shall have the authority to confiscate the device from the student's possession. Refusal by a student to give the device to school personnel when requested may result in the student being suspended from school. Punishment for violation will be determined by the student discipline policy. Where appropriate, police authorities may be contacted.

Students found to be using a cell phone or any personal electronic wireless telecommunications device for any illegal purpose, violation of privacy, or to in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on tests or examinations shall be subject to discipline and the device may shall be confiscated by the administration of the school district. Any cell phone or personal electronic device that is confiscated will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. Students violating this rule may be disallowed from carrying a cell phone or any personal electronic device following the incident unless the device is utilized to monitor a health condition.

REFERENCE:70 O.S. §1-126
70 O.S. §24-101.1, et seq.
70 O.S. §24-102

THIS POLICY REQUIRED BY LAW.

Adopted by the Board of Education on 8-10-89. Revised 7-10-97, Revised 7-25-00, Revised 10-8-01, Revised 7-16-07, Revised 9-10-15, Revised 11-19-24, Revised 6-24-25