Back to School: Internet-Enabled Device Ban and Code of Conduct

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ARLINGTON
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cell Phone and Internet-Enabled Device Ban

In 2025, the New York State Legislature passed a new law that will go into effect starting with the 2025-2026 school year, prohibiting student use of smartphones and similar internet-enabled devices during the school day.

This statewide “bell-to-bell” ban on personal internet-enabled devices, includes cell phones, smart watches and tablets. In devising its policy, the District consulted with local stakeholders including our district physician, employee organizations, parents, and students. This policy aims to ensure that students remain focused on their academic responsibilities throughout the entire school day, from bell to bell.

This summer, the Board of Education adopted policy #7316: *Use of Internet-Enabled Devices During the School Day.*

Its goal is to reduce distractions, promote learning and support student well-being in the school environment. **This policy will be amended shortly to reflect guidance from the New York State Education Department that prohibits the use of backpacks as a storage device.**

Where will students store their devices?

Middle and High School: Students must keep all personal internet-enabled devices, such as cell phones, turned off and stored in their lockers during the school day.
Elementary School: We strongly discourage elementary students from bringing personal internet-enabled devices to school.

Why can't the devices be stored in backpacks?

While the District had originally planned to have students keep their phones off and away in their backpacks, clarification from both the Office of the Governor and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) indicated that backpacks “… are not an allowable storage solution.” Please see these links for more information.
From NYSED: **2025 Distraction-Free Schools: Guidance**
From the Office of the Governor: **Distraction-Free Schools: Implementation Resources**.

Please click here for a copy of the policy and a detailed list of FAQs.

Code of Conduct

The Arlington Central School District Board of Education (Board) strives to create safe, inclusive environments that support the mental, social and emotional well-being of all students. The District is committed to providing a school environment where students and staff engage and thrive in the teaching and learning process.

The District has a long standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of safety, civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, acceptance, inclusiveness, equity, honesty and integrity.
The Board recognizes the need to define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences and interventions of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered promptly and equitably. To this end, the Board updates this Code of Conduct (Code) every August.

This Code applies to all stakeholders, which include students, employees, parents and other visitors when on school property, school buses or attending a school function, including distance learning activities, or when engaged in off-campus behavior that endangers the health, safety and well-being of members of the school community.

Please click here for a copy of the Code of Conduct Summary.