CELL PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN SCHOOLS

The intent of this policy is to support a focused learning environment, minimize distractions, and promote student social and emotional well-being by regulating the use of student personal cell phones, smart watches, and other personal electronic devices (PEDs) during the school day.

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

BELL TO BELL PROHIBITION

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, from starting to dismissal, except as otherwise permitted in this policy.

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

- Prior to the starting bell, cell phones and other PEDs must be powered off and remain off and 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 situation as authorized by the building administrator in accordance with the school unit'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 school/district will communicate with parents as promptly as possible in accordance with the school unit's Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan.

The school unit 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/building administrators will be responsible for developing and implementing procedures to implement/enforce this policy. Students and parents will be provided notice of this policy

through student handbooks and/or other means of communication prior to the beginning of the school year.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA § 1001(23)

Cross Reference: 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

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