



MCGOWAN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Jayne Latta Vice-Principal: Linda Hneeda

Personal Digital Devices Guidelines & Expectations

Background

As of July 1, 2024, the Kamloops Thompson School District is revising the district's student code of conduct ([Administrative Procedure 350](#)) to include the following language as required by [Ministerial Order M89](#):

- Comply with restrictions on personal digital device (cell phones, smartwatches, etc.) use at school to promote online safety and focused learning environments by demonstrating:
 - Use of personal digital devices to support equitable access to learning outcomes.
 - Use of personal digital devices for instructional purposes and digital literacy development.
 - Use of personal digital devices that is appropriate to a student's age and developmental stage.
 - Use of personal digital devices for accessibility and accommodation needs, including medical and health needs.

McGowan Park Elementary School's personal digital devices guidelines & expectations are guided by the above language and have been developed in collaboration with staff and parents/caregivers to promote online safety and focused learning environments for all students. Moreover, there is no need for students to rely on their personal digital devices as instructional tools.

Expectations

1. Permitted Use:

In certain unique cases, students are allowed to use personal digital devices at all times:

- When required for medical needs as outlined in their Competency-Based Individual Education Plan or confirmed by their physician.
- When necessary for accessibility and instructional accommodation needs as outlined in their Competency-Based Individual Education Plan, Service Plan, or Annual Instruction Plan.

2. During Instructional Time:

- Student use of personal digital devices is only permitted at the discretion of the staff.
- Students are encouraged to avoid bringing personal electronic devices to school.

3. During Non Instructional Time (before & after school, breaks):

- Use of personal digital devices is discouraged to be brought on school district property before and after school.
- Use is not permitted during breaks (recess and lunch) and during after school sponsored events.
- Any use must comply with [Administrative Procedure 145: Use of Personal Electronic Devices](#).

4. Violations and Consequences:

Student behavior that does not adhere to these guidelines will be addressed using [Administrative Procedure 350: Student Code of Conduct](#) and [Administrative Procedure 355: Student Discipline](#).

In the spirit of transparency and a commitment to working with our community, discipline under our McGowan Personal Digital Device Guidelines & Expectations will follow a progressive response system, aimed at promoting responsible use and minimizing disruptions during instructional time.

Policy Overview:

- **First Incident:** If a student is found using their personal digital device during the school day, they will be asked to store it in their locker/cubby and instructed not to access it until after school hours.
- **Second Incident:** If a student is found using their personal digital device a second time, it will be temporarily confiscated and stored at the school office for the remainder of the day. The student may retrieve it at the end of the day.
- **Third Incident:** On the third occurrence, the personal digital device will be confiscated, and parents/caregivers will need to come to the school to retrieve it. A consultation with the Principal will be required to develop a plan moving forward. This reinforces the importance of adhering to this policy.

We believe this policy will help create a more focused and productive learning environment for all students. It will also encourage responsible personal digital device usage and minimize distractions during class time. We understand that there may be instances where students need to use their cell phones for specific purposes or be contacted in an emergency. In such cases, we encourage them to seek guidance from their teachers or the school office. I would also like to reiterate that the office is able to be contacted should you need to communicate with your student.

We kindly request your support in reinforcing this policy with your child and encourage you to discuss its importance. Thank -you for your support and cooperation.

Definitions

- **Personal digital device:** *may be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as a cell phone or a tablet. Additional examples of devices that may fall into this definition are cell phones, smart watches, gaming devices, and electronic toys;*
- **Instructional purposes:** *includes the use of devices as determined by school policy and directed by teachers during class time;*
- **Digital literacy purposes:** *includes designated computer or cell phone time that serves to promote digital literacy by providing opportunities for students to use devices while under the supervision of a teacher, which may include critical dialogue regarding responsible, creative, and pedagogically appropriate use of devices.*