

Limestone Charter Association Policy Guidance: Prohibiting Use of Personal Electronic Devices During the School Day

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a phone-free school environment that fosters a positive learning experience, free from electronic distractions. By prohibiting the use of personal electronic devices during the school day, this policy aims to enhance focus and engagement, enabling students to develop the college and career-ready skills outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. This policy encourages meaningful interactions, collaboration, and skill-building to prepare students for success in college, careers, and life.

This policy complies with Proviso 1.103 of the General Appropriations Bill, H. 5100 (2024), which mandates a districtwide policy restricting personal electronic device use during the school day for students in grades K-12.

Definitions

1. **Personal Electronic Device ("Device")** Any device used to access the internet, Wi-Fi, cellular signals, or capture images/videos. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Cell phones
 - Smartwatches
 - Tablets
 - Gaming devices
2. **Device Accessories** Wired or wireless items connected to a device, such as:
 - Headphones
 - Earbuds
 - Wearable technology
3. **School Day** The period of time from the arrival bell to the dismissal bell at the end of instructional time. This policy may extend to:
 - School buses
 - Field trips
 - Athletic events
4. **Access** Refers to viewing, holding, wearing, or using a device for any function, including communication, gaming, internet access, or recording. Devices must be powered off and stored as directed unless authorized.
5. **Authorized for Classroom Use** Device use explicitly approved by the District Superintendent or designee. Approval must:
 - Align with educational objectives that cannot reasonably be met with school-owned devices.
 - Be clearly communicated to students with instructions for appropriate use.
 - Authorization may be revoked if it causes disruption or fails to meet educational objectives.

Each LCA School and their Board will determine the applicability of the policy to these activities.

Policy Guidelines

1. Devices and accessories are prohibited during the school day unless explicitly authorized for educational purposes.
 2. Devices must be powered off and stored in lockers, backpacks, or other designated locations.
 3. School districts may prohibit devices entirely from school property.
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Special Permissions

1. Students may access devices for medical or educational reasons as outlined in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Medical Plan, or 504 Plan.
 2. Students participating in volunteer firefighting or emergency services may carry devices with prior written approval from the District Superintendent or designee.
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Disciplinary Actions

Violations of this policy will result in progressive disciplinary action per the student code of conduct at each LCA-authorized school.

Implementation and Enforcement

1. **Administrative Support** Teachers and staff will receive administrative backing to enforce the policy fairly and consistently at the school level.
 2. **Communication** This policy will be included in the school's:
 - Student Code of Conduct
 - District and School Board Policies
 - Other relevant publications
 3. **Review Process** A districtwide survey will be conducted by April 30, 2025, to gather feedback on the implementation of this policy. Results will guide revisions for the following school year.
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This policy ensures compliance with state requirements while fostering a focused and distraction-free learning environment across all Limestone Charter Association schools.