

Use of Personal Electronic Devices - Bethlehem Catholic High School

Jan. 27, 2025

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of personal electronic devices during class time within Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. This policy aims to foster an environment conducive to learning, free from the distractions that personal electronic devices may present, and to ensure that all students are fully engaged in their educational experience.

These procedures apply to all GSCS students during instructional time and include classroom spaces and other instructional areas, including off-campus instruction.

Definitions

- **Instructional Time:** The period of time during which a class is in session (*instructional time is from when the bell rings to start class until the bell rings to end class*).
- **Personal Electronic Devices:** Includes any personal mobile device capable of making calls, sending messages, accessing the internet, or other digital media, including (but not limited to) smartphones, tablets, computers and portable video game systems.

Headphones and ear buds:

- *Students are not permitted to use headphones and/or ear buds during instructional time, as all phones are to be out of sight, in silent mode or off during class time. Therefore, students aren't allowed to listen to music in class, from their phones.*

Procedures

1. General Procedures

- 1.1** Students will keep personal electronic devices out of sight and on silent mode or off during instruction. This includes texting, calling, accessing social media, browsing the internet, or using any applications. Wearable technology (e.g., smartwatches) may be worn but must be configured to prevent distractions from alerts and/or communications.
- 1.2** Use of personal electronic devices is prohibited in areas where there is an increased expectation of privacy (e.g., washrooms, changing rooms, private counselling rooms).
- 1.3** Use personal electronic devices is prohibited in the library during instructional time, even when students are on spares as this space is shared with other classes. Students are welcome to work in the commons during their spares if they would like to use their personal electronic device.

2. Exceptions

All requests for exceptions will be directed to the school principal. The classroom teacher may make the request on behalf of a student. The principal may grant an exception based on:

- 2.1 Educational Use:** The use of personal electronic devices may be permitted for specific instructional or assessment purposes. In such cases, the teacher will clearly communicate the allowed use to students.
- 2.2 Medical:** Students with documented medical conditions that require the use of a mobile device must obtain prior approval from school administration (Kindergarten to Grade 12).
- 2.3 Family Emergencies:** In case of a family emergency, students must inform the teacher or school administration and may be granted temporary permission to use their electronic devices.

3. Storage and Handling

Students must keep their electronic devices turned off or on silent and stored in their lockers, bags or out of sight on their person. While at school, personal technology remains the responsibility of the owner. Schools are not responsible for students' personal electronic devices in the event of loss, damage or theft.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Students

- Adhere to the cell phone policy and store and/or adjust settings on devices as required.
- Refrain from using personal electronic devices during instructional time unless permitted by the teacher.
- Practice responsible digital citizenship.

4.2 Parents/Caregivers

- Communicate with the classroom teacher, school principal or designate regarding any circumstances that may require exceptions as outlined within policy.
- Be aware of the expectations set out regarding the use of personal electronic devices.
- Understand that students do not have access to their personal electronic devices during instructional time and will be unable to respond promptly to calls or texts.
- Contact the main office during instructional time with any emergent communication that is required.