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TITLE	Students and Personal Electronic Devices			
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The Board of Education recognizes that students may have personal electronic devices that can perform different functions. Such devices include “internet-enabled devices” defined as: any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications, but do not include any such device supplied by the district for educational purposes. These devices can create significant distraction to the school environment, negatively impact student mental health, contribute to disciplinary infractions, and reduce student engagement. This policy aims to ensure that students remain focused on their academic responsibilities and positive social interactions throughout the school day, which includes all instructional and non-instructional time periods such as homeroom, cafeteria, recess, study halls, and passing time. Additionally, in an emergency, the use of personal electronic devices can distract students from following the directions of staff or emergency responders, contribute to the spread of misinformation, create congestion in the emergency response system, and interfere with the district’s emergency response protocols. Generally, the district is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged personal electronic devices brought to school.

#### Communication with Parents/Persons in Parental Relation

During the school day, to minimize distractions, parents (which, for purposes of this policy, includes persons in parental relation) may contact their children via the following methods: calling the school office, using the provided building contact form on the District website, or ParentSquare. Students may contact their parents by the same methods above. The district will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

#### Device Access and Storage

As required by Education Law §2803, this policy prohibits student use of internet-enabled devices and related listening devices (headphones, ear buds) during the school day (including all classes, homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time) on school grounds (any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the boundary of a school or district or BOCES facility), unless under an exception (e.g., IEP/Section 504 or as permitted below).

1. At the elementary school level, students are discouraged from bringing devices to school. Any device that is brought to school must be silenced and kept in the school office.
2. At the intermediate, middle and high school levels, student devices must be silenced and stored in student lockers.

#### Exceptions for Specific Purposes

Use of internet-enabled devices and related listening devices (headphones, ear buds) must be permitted where included in a student’s Individualized Education Program, Section 504 plan, or

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where required by law. Additionally, the district permits the use of internet-enabled devices in the event of an emergency, and under the following circumstances:

1. Where necessary to manage a student's healthcare (e.g., diabetes, asthma, medication, etc.);
2. For translation services; and/or
3. For students who are routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member (on a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor).

Parents may request an exception for their children to use internet-enabled devices during the school day as listed above. Requests must be made to the Building Principal, and for healthcare exceptions, must include documentation from an appropriate healthcare professional.

#### Enforcement, Consequences and Reporting

All staff are expected to assist in enforcement of this policy as per procedures involving the WGCSD Code of Conduct. Students will be reminded of this policy regularly and consistently, especially at the start of the school year and after returning from breaks.

For students out of compliance with this policy, the device will be confiscated until the end of the school day. Procedures for recouping the device will be shared by building principals to include student retrieval, release to parent, and appropriate intervention plans, as determined by the frequency or severity of the violation. For students with exceptions under this policy, the district will examine alternative ways to achieve the purpose of the exception, including different storage or access provisions.

Administrators will also discuss the aims of this policy with students and their parents, the benefits of a distraction-free environment, the reasons the student had difficulty following this policy, and how the district can help the student contribute to a distraction-free environment.

The district will not impose suspension from school if the sole grounds for the suspension is that the student accessed an internet-enabled device, as prohibited. All other provisions of the WGCSD District Code of Conduct remain.

Some uses of personal electronic devices may constitute a violation of the school district Code of Conduct or other district policies, and in some instances, the law. The district will cooperate with law enforcement officials as appropriate.

#### Electronic Devices and Testing

To continue to ensure the integrity of testing, in accordance with state guidelines, students may not bring cell phones or other electronic devices into classrooms or other exam locations during all testing. Teachers may grant specific permission for electronic device usage during tests other than state assessments.

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Test proctors, monitors and school officials have the right to collect cell phones and other prohibited electronic devices prior to the start of the test and to hold them for the duration of the test taking time. Admission to the test will be prohibited to any student who has a cell phone or other electronic device in their possession and does not relinquish it.

Students with Individualized Education Plans, Section 504 Plans, or documentation from medical practitioners specifically requiring use of electronic devices may do so as specified.

#### Policy Distribution and Translation

As required by law, the district will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website. Upon request by a student or parent, the district will translate this policy into any of the most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in the state, as identified by the most recent American community survey published by the U.S. Census bureau.

The district will also include this information, or a plain language summary, in student/family handbooks.

Ref: Education Law §2803