

Suggested Revisions and Additions

1. Strengthen the Purpose Statement (Lines 1–7)

Current language:

“...students are permitted to possess such devices on school property so long as the devices are not activated, used, displayed, or visible during instructional time...”

Proposed revision:

“The Board recognizes the significant and growing body of research linking excessive screen time and cell phone use to increased adolescent anxiety, depression, social isolation, and academic distraction. In response, the Board adopts this policy to protect student well-being, promote face-to-face engagement, and ensure classrooms are free from unnecessary technological distractions. While parents may need to contact students during emergencies, the instructional day must be preserved as a low-tech, high-focus environment.”

2. Eliminate or Restrict “Discretion” Loopholes (Lines 12 and following)

Problem: The current policy gives wide discretion to principals and teachers to allow device use.

Recommended language change:

- Elementary and Middle School:

“Wireless communication devices must remain off and secured in backpacks or lockers throughout the school day. No use, display, or visibility of such devices is permitted from the moment students arrive on campus until they leave, including during lunch and class transitions. Exceptions may only be granted for documented medical needs or individualized education plans (IEPs).”

- High School:

“High school students may possess devices but must keep them powered off and out of sight during all instructional time, transitions, and any time within academic buildings. Use is permitted only in designated outdoor areas before or after the school day. Principals may not authorize regular in-class use of personal devices for instruction unless district-approved digital tools are required for a

specific unit or course.”

- Smartwatches (clarify and extend ban):

“Smartwatches with messaging, camera, or internet capabilities are subject to the same restrictions as cell phones and must be stored away during school hours.”

3. Ban All Use in After-School Programs (Line 40 and following)

Current:

“...elementary and middle school students...prohibited from using wireless communication devices during such programs.”

Suggested:

“All students participating in after-school programs, regardless of grade level, are prohibited from using wireless communication devices unless approved in writing by a program supervisor for emergency purposes.”

4. Insert a New Section: “Rationale and Mental Health Considerations” (After Section A)

E. Research-Based Justification

“This policy is informed by clinical and educational research showing that smartphones and other wireless communication devices contribute to increased student anxiety, reduced attention span, sleep disruption, and impaired social development. The Board is committed to cultivating a learning environment in which students can develop focus, resilience, and interpersonal skills without the constant pull of digital distraction.”

5. Tighten Language on Consequences (at current Lines 47 and following)

Current:

“The principal has the discretion to return devices to the student based on compelling and unusual circumstances.”

Suggested revision:

“Confiscated devices will be returned only to a parent or guardian. Devices will not be returned to students directly except in emergencies approved by the superintendent.”

Add:

“A pattern of repeated violations may result in the student being required to check in their device at the start of each day for a designated period.”

6. Improve Search & Privacy Clarity (Insert after current line 71)

Consider adding:

“Students and parents should be aware that misuse of wireless communication devices may warrant a search, consistent with legal standards. Students who refuse a lawful request to turn over or unlock a device will face disciplinary action under Policy 4315.”

7. Add a New Final Section: “Instructional Technology Clarification”

E. Instructional Technology vs. Personal Devices

“The Board affirms the appropriate and limited use of district-managed instructional technology (e.g., Chromebooks or tablets) when teacher-directed and aligned with academic objectives. However, personal devices—including smartphones and smartwatches—are not to be used for instruction, research, or assignments during the school day unless specifically approved by the superintendent. This policy aims to reinforce teacher-student interaction and limit technology dependency.”