

August 30, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you well and that you had a wonderful summer. As the new school year begins, I am filled with excitement and optimism about the opportunities that lie ahead for our students. The start of a new year is always a time of renewal, where students return to familiar surroundings, reconnect with friends, and embark on new learning adventures.

As we move into this next year, our focus will remain on supporting student success, well-being, and a love for learning. We are fortunate to have an exceptional team of educators and staff who are dedicated to creating nurturing, engaging and inclusive learning environments. Through our collective efforts, we will continue to empower our students to realize their full potential. We will continue to help them develop critical thinking skills and improve digital literacy; we will continue to nurture their creativity; and we will continue to instill in them a strong sense of responsibility towards the world around them.

This year, we will also begin engaging in important discussions about the next iteration of our district's Strategic Plan. This plan will serve as a roadmap, guiding us in setting priorities, allocating resources, and making informed decisions that directly impact our students. As we thoughtfully build upon the foundations laid by our current plan, we will carefully evaluate what has worked well and identify areas where we can improve, always with the goal of ensuring the best possible education for every student.

In addition to our academic focus, I want to bring to your attention an important update regarding the use of personal digital devices in our schools. In alignment with the Ministry of Education and Child Care's mandate, the Richmond Board of Education has updated our District Code of Conduct and established new guidelines on the acceptable use of personal digital devices. These changes are designed to promote online safety and ensure a focused learning environment for all students. I encourage you to review the attached update, which outlines the specific guidelines and expectations for both elementary and secondary students.

As always, your involvement and support play an important role in the success of your child's educational journey. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's education or the new digital device policy, I encourage you to reach out to your school principal. Open communication and collaboration between parents, guardians, and our school communities are key to creating a positive and enriching educational experience.

Thank you for entrusting us with the education of your children. Together, we will continue to create a future where every student can flourish and achieve their dreams.

Best wishes for a successful school year!

Sincerely,

Christopher Usih
Superintendent of Schools
Richmond School District

重要な情報です - 翻訳してください
重要資訊 - 請找人翻譯 Informations importantes - Veuillez traduire s'il vous plait
Important Information – Please Translate
Mahalagang Impormasyon - Paki salin sa sariling wika 重要信息 - 請找人翻譯
ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ - ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰੋ

Richmond School District Update: Personal Digital Device Policy Changes

In January 2024, the Ministry of Education and Child Care mandated all school boards in British Columbia to update their Codes of Conduct to include restrictions on students' personal digital device use.

On June 19, 2024, the Richmond Board of Education passed a motion to update Policy 105: District Code of Conduct effective July 1, 2024. The updated policy will:

- Restrict students' use of personal digital devices at school, including during instructional time or learning related activities, to promote online safety and a focused learning environment, unless use is permitted by supervising staff.
- Support the acceptable use of student personal digital devices for accessibility and accommodation needs, medical and health needs, and to support equity of learning outcomes.

In conjunction with the updates to Policy 105, the district developed Policy 104-G (A): Acceptable Use of Personal Digital Devices. The key components of these administrative guidelines are as follows:

Elementary Schools (K-7):

- Students should not have personal digital devices in their possession during the school day unless permission is granted by the supervising staff for educational purposes. This includes during recess and lunch or while outside on the playground or on school property.
- It is recommended that students do not bring personal digital devices to school.

Secondary Schools (Grades 8-12):

- Students should not use personal digital devices during instructional time, unless permission is granted by the supervising staff for educational purposes.
- When not permitted, personal digital devices should be powered off and secured inside a student's backpack, locker or secured location.

To view the complete policies and guidelines, please visit the district website or use the provided links below:

- [Policy 104-G \(A\): Acceptable Use of Personal Digital Devices](#)
- [Policy 105: District Code of Conduct](#)

The district values the collaborative partnership among students, parents and staff. Moving forward, schools will engage with their communities to facilitate this transition. Should you have any inquiries or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to your school principal.

Resources:

- Media Smarts – Canada’s Centre for Digital Media Literacy:
 - <https://mediasmarts.ca>
- Common Sense – Family Engagement Resources
 - <https://www.commonsense.org/education/toolkit/family-engagement-resources>
- ERASE – Expect Respect and a Safe Education:
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase>