

Personal Digital Device Guidelines – Frequently Asked Questions

In September, various questions arose regarding the implementation of our personal digital device guidelines. This FAQ provides answers to the most common questions to promote clarity and ensure consistent application of the guidelines across the district.

1. Can students use personal digital devices on school busses?

Elementary:

- Students should not use personal digital devices while on a school bus as students have been requested not to bring personal digital devices to school. This includes while on a field trip as well as before and after school transportation.

Secondary:

- Field trips: Students should not use personal digital devices while on a field trip, as this is school sponsored instructional time, unless permission is granted by the supervising staff.
- Before and after school transportation: Students may use personal digital devices while on the school bus, as this is outside of instructional time.

2. Can students use personal digital devices before and after school hours on school premises (i.e. while watching an extra-curricular event)?

Elementary

- Students should not use personal digital devices while at school. Students have been requested not to bring personal digital devices to school, and extra curricular events are considered an extension of the classroom. This includes before and after school.

Secondary

- Students may use personal digital devices outside of instructional time, such as before and after school.

3. Should staff collect or store student personal digital devices?

Elementary and Secondary

- Staff should avoid collecting or storing student personal digital devices. This minimizes any risk and ensures staff, and the school, are not held responsible for lost or misplaced devices.
- Best practice is to model and reinforce that devices should be powered off and stored inside a

student's backpack or locker.

- In a unique situation where a device needs to be collected by a staff member, the device should be labelled and locked up, or even better, turned into the principal or vice principal to be locked within the office. Schools are encouraged to discuss these procedures.

4. Is it reasonable to allow students' 'free time' on their personal digital devices during instructional time?

Elementary and Secondary

- Personal digital devices should only be used for educational purposes during instructional time. Non-educational use of personal digital devices should not be permitted, including as a reward for finishing work early or during self-directed work time.

5. In a secondary school, can students use personal digital devices during PLT, collaboration time or during a study block?

Secondary

- If a student is inside a classroom, the classroom routines apply. Personal digital devices should be powered off and in the student's backpack, unless permission has been granted by the staff member.
- If a student is working in a common area of the school (e.g. multi-purpose room), students are permitted to use their personal digital devices for educational purposes.
 - Part of the purpose of personal learning time is that students will have agency in their learning, including practicing self-regulation while using technology. If a student is using a personal digital device for non-educational use, a conversation to remind them about the purpose of this time would be appropriate.