

Regulation 5131.8: Mobile Communication Devices

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 06/23/2026 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 06/23/2026

1. Definitions

Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Smartphones and cell phones
- Smartwatches with communication capability
- Earbuds and headphones
- Tablets or similar personal devices
- Recording devices (e.g., Meta glasses)

2. Standard: "Off and Away"

"Off and away" means:

- Device is powered off, on silent, or in "Do Not Disturb" mode
- Device is not visible or accessible to the student
- Device is stored in a backpack or designated location as directed by staff⁵

3. Applicability

This regulation applies:

- On campus, including before school, passing periods, recess, and lunch
- During school-sponsored activities
- Under the supervision and control of district staff

4. Elementary and K-8 Expectations

Grades TK-6 (Elementary)

- Students may bring devices to school for safety purposes; however, the district strongly discourages bringing personal electronic devices to school.
- Devices must remain off and away for the entire school day ("bell-to-bell" or "gate-to-gate"), including:
 - Before school
 - Instructional time
 - Recess
 - Lunch
- No student use is permitted during the school day unless:
 - Explicitly authorized by staff for instructional purposes
 - Required by an IEP, Section 504 Plan, or documented medical need
- Earbuds, headphones, and smartwatches must also remain off and stored.

Grades 7-8 (Middle School)

- Devices must remain off and away for the entire school day ("bell-to-bell" or "gate-to-gate"), including:
 - Passing periods

- Lunch
- Use is permitted only:
 - With staff authorization for instructional purposes
 - With administrative approval when appropriate
- Earbuds, headphones, and smartwatches must remain off and stored unless authorized.

5. Secondary Expectations (Grades 9–12)

- Devices must be off and away during instructional time.
- Use may be permitted:
 - Before school
 - Passing periods
 - During lunch
- Teachers may authorize use for instructional purposes when:
 - Clearly aligned to instructional objectives
 - Structured and time-bound
 - Actively monitored and supervised

6. Classroom Expectations

- Students shall place devices in designated storage systems or keep them off and away as directed by staff.
- Devices may only be used when:
 - Authorized by the teacher
 - Used for instructional purposes

7. Permitted Use / Exceptions

Students may use personal electronic devices only when:

- Explicitly authorized by school staff for instructional purposes
- Required for a documented IEP, Section 504 Plan, or medical need
- Approved by administration for an emergency or extenuating circumstance

The school office remains the primary point of contact for urgent communication between families and students. Communication between students and home needs to go through the office

8. Prohibited Conduct

Students shall not:

- Use devices in violation of “off and away” expectations
- Record, photograph, or audio capture individuals without consent
- Use wearable recording devices without authorization
- Use devices for academic dishonesty
- Engage in bullying, harassment, or inappropriate communication
- Use devices in restrooms, locker rooms, or private areas

- Access inappropriate content
- Disrupt the learning environment

9. Staff Authority and Response to Misuse

Staff may:

- Direct devices to be put away
- Redirect students to comply with expectations
- Require devices to be relinquished
- Confiscate devices for the remainder of the class period or school day
- Refer repeated misuse to administration

Schools may implement progressive responses to repeated misuse, including:

1. Device held by staff until end of class or end of day
2. Device transferred to the office until dismissal
3. Parent/guardian notification and required retrieval
4. Parent/student/device-use agreements
5. Documentation in Aeries or other district systems

All responses shall be:

- Consistent with district discipline policies
- Developmentally appropriate
- Focused on correcting behavior and maintaining a safe learning environment

10. Handling, Storage, and Care of Devices

When a device is taken from a student:

- Staff shall exercise reasonable care in handling the device
- The device may be held by staff or transferred to a secure and locked location
- Access shall be limited to authorized personnel
- Site administrators may establish procedures for:
 - Storage
 - Documentation
 - Logging devices in and out
 - Return of devices

Placing a confiscated device on top of or inside an unlocked desk or cabinet is not considered a properly secured location.

The district is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage except in cases of gross negligence.

11. Search of Devices

Personal electronic devices shall not be searched except in accordance with law and district policy.

12. Privacy and Safety

Students shall not use devices to violate the privacy, safety, or rights of others.

Students shall not:

- Record or photograph others without permission
- Use devices in restrooms, locker rooms, or other private areas
- Use devices in a manner that disrupts school operations or compromises safety

13. Emergency Procedures

- Students must follow all staff directions during emergencies.
- Personal devices may not be used unless directed by staff.
- Students may contact families through the office or with staff permission.
- Families should contact the school office for urgent communication.

14. Access and Equity

Schools shall ensure:

- Students have access to necessary instructional technology
- Alternatives are provided when personal devices are not available

15. Site Implementation

Schools may implement site-specific systems aligned with this regulation, including:

- Gate-to-gate restrictions
- Classroom phone storage systems
- Designated phone-free zones
- Office-based procedures
- Structured collection procedures
- Device-use agreements

16. Communication and Review

- This policy and regulation shall be communicated annually to students and families.
- The policy shall be included in student and parent handbooks.
- Schools may reinforce expectations throughout the school year.
- The district shall review and update this policy and regulation at least every five years in accordance with state law.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the Governing Board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State

5 CCR 300-307

Civ. Code 1714.1

Ed. Code 200-262.4

Ed. Code 32280-32289.5

Ed. Code 35181

Ed. Code 35291-35291.5

Description

[Duties of students](#)

[Liability of parent/guardian for act of willful misconduct by a minor](#)

[Prohibition of discrimination](#)

[School safety plans](#)

[Governing board authority to set policy on responsibilities of students](#)

[Rules](#)

State

Ed. Code 44807
 Ed. Code 48900-48925
 Ed. Code 48901.5
 Ed. Code 48901.7
 Ed. Code 48901.8
 Ed. Code 51512
 Pen. Code 1546.1
 Pen. Code 288.2
 Pen. Code 313
 Pen. Code 647
 Pen. Code 653.2
 Veh. Code 23123-23124

Description

[Teachers' duty concerning conduct of students](#)
[Suspension and expulsion](#)
[Prohibition of electronic signaling devices](#)
[Limitation or prohibition of student use of smartphones](#)
 Limitation or prohibition of student use of social media
[Prohibited use of electronic listening or recording device](#)
 Electronic Communications Privacy Act
[Harmful matter with intent to seduce](#)
[Harmful matter](#)
[Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; misdemeanor](#)
[Electronic communication devices; threats to safety](#)
[Prohibitions against use of electronic devices while driving](#)

Federal

20 USC 1681-1688

Description

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; discrimination based on sex

Management Resources

California Department of Education Publication
 Court Decision
 Court Decision
 Court Decision
 Court Decision
 Court Decision
 CSBA Publication
 CSBA Publication
 U.S. Department of Education Publication
 Website
 Website
 Website
 Website
 Website
 Website

Description

[Bullying at School, 2003](#)
 Safford Unified School District V. Redding (2009) 557 US 364
 Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L. (2021) 594 U.S. 180
[J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified School District \(2010\) 711 F.Supp.2d 1094](#)
[New Jersey v. T.L.O. \(1985\) 469 U.S. 325](#)
[Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District \(1969\) 393 U.S. 503](#)
[Cyberbullying: Policy Considerations for Boards, Policy Brief, rev. July 2010](#)
[Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success, 2011](#)
[Planning Together: A Playbook for Student Personal Device Policies, December 2024](#)
[CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services](#)
[National School Safety Center](#)
[Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use](#)
[California Department of Education, Safe Schools](#)
[CSBA](#)
[U.S. Department of Education](#)

Cross References

0450
 0450
 5131
 5131.2
 5131.2

Description

[Comprehensive Safety Plan](#)
[Comprehensive Safety Plan](#)
[Conduct](#)
[Bullying](#)
[Bullying](#)

Cross References

5131.4
5131.9
5137
5141.52
5141.52
5145.12
5145.12
5145.2
5145.2
6159
6159
6163.4
6163.4-E(1)

Description

[Student Disturbances](#)
[Academic Honesty](#)
[Positive School Climate](#)
[Suicide Prevention](#)
[Suicide Prevention](#)
[Search And Seizure](#)
[Search And Seizure](#)
[Freedom Of Speech/Expression](#)
[Freedom Of Speech/Expression](#)
[Individualized Education Program](#)
[Individualized Education Program](#)
[Student Use Of Technology](#)
[Student Use Of Technology](#)