

WALDEN ACADEMY POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Chapter 5600 – Students

Section 00 – Technology & Electronic Communication Device Policy

Revised Date: July 1, 2026

Responsible Department: School Director

Source Document: California Education Code §48901.7

Purpose

Walden Academy believes technology offers valuable, diverse, and unique resources that support educational excellence and student achievement. The school is committed to promoting responsible technology use while maintaining a safe, focused, and distraction-free learning environment.

Consistent with California Education Code §48901.7, Walden Academy has adopted this policy to promote evidence-based practices that support student learning, academic engagement, mental well-being, and positive school culture by regulating student use of smartphones and personal electronic communication devices during the school day.

Technology and Electronic Communication Devices (ECDs) include, but are not limited to, computers, tablets, cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, cameras, GPS units, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and similar electronic devices.

Use of technology and ECDs is a privilege, not a right. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, loss of technology privileges, confiscation of devices, and other consequences consistent with school discipline policies.

Student Smartphone and Electronic Device Use

Students may possess personal electronic devices while on campus; however, use of such devices is subject to the restrictions outlined below.

During the School Day

Students shall keep smartphones and personal electronic devices powered off or in silent mode and stored out of sight during:

- Instructional time;
- Assemblies;
- School-sponsored activities;
- Field trips;
- Any time students are under the direct supervision of school staff.

Students may not use smartphones, smartwatches, earbuds, headphones, or other personal electronic devices for texting, calling, internet browsing, gaming, social media, photography, video recording, or messaging during these periods unless specifically authorized by a teacher or administrator.

Permitted Use

Students may use personal electronic devices:

- Before the start of the school day;
- After dismissal;
- During times specifically authorized by school staff;
- For instructional activities approved by a teacher;
- In emergency situations as described below.

Required Exceptions

Consistent with California Education Code §48901.7, students may use a smartphone or electronic device when:

1. A school employee determines that the student needs the device for an educational purpose.
2. A school employee determines that the student needs the device because of a health-related purpose.
3. Use of the device is required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or other documented accommodation.
4. The device is necessary to respond to a health or safety emergency or to a perceived threat of danger.
5. The School Director or designee authorizes use for a specific purpose.

Technology Terms and Conditions

User Personal Safety

Users shall not post or share personal information about themselves or others. Personal information includes, but is not limited to:

- Names
- Addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Dates of birth
- Photographs
- Personal profiles

Users shall not arrange meetings with individuals met online without parental permission and school knowledge.

Users shall immediately report messages, content, or communications that are inappropriate, threatening, or make them feel uncomfortable.

Users shall not harass, bully, intimidate, discriminate against, or threaten another person through any form of technology.

Respecting Technology Equipment

Users shall:

- Exercise caution when handling technology devices;
- Follow staff instructions regarding proper use;
- Use only authorized accounts and devices;
- Refrain from using another person's technology resources without permission.

System Security

Users are responsible for safeguarding passwords and account information.

Users shall not:

- Share passwords;
- Access another person's account;
- Circumvent security measures;
- Attempt unauthorized access to school systems.

Walden Academy technology systems are school property and may be monitored or inspected at any time. Students should have no expectation of privacy regarding information stored, transmitted, or accessed through school-owned technology resources.

Illegal Activities

Users shall not:

- Attempt unauthorized access to any computer system;
- Introduce viruses or malicious software;
- Interfere with network operations;
- Engage in illegal activities using school technology.

The school may cooperate with law enforcement agencies investigating unlawful activity.

Plagiarism and Copyright

Users shall:

- Respect intellectual property rights;
 - Cite sources appropriately;
 - Avoid plagiarism;
 - Follow copyright and fair-use laws.
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Technology Etiquette

Students shall:

- Communicate respectfully;
 - Avoid abusive, threatening, vulgar, obscene, or discriminatory language;
 - Respect the privacy and rights of others;
 - Use technology in a manner consistent with Walden Academy's educational mission.
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Inappropriate Access to Material

Students shall not access, transmit, create, or distribute content that:

- Is obscene or pornographic;
- Promotes violence or illegal activity;
- Harasses or threatens others;
- Encourages discrimination or hate.

Students who inadvertently encounter inappropriate material shall immediately notify a staff member.

Respecting Resource Limits

Users shall:

- Use technology primarily for educational purposes;
- Avoid unauthorized software downloads;
- Refrain from spamming or distributing chain messages;
- Not use school technology for commercial purposes;
- Avoid intentionally wasting school technology resources.

Appropriate Use of Educational Technology

Students shall not:

- Access social media platforms during instructional time unless authorized by a teacher;
- Play non-educational games during school hours;
- Use personal messaging applications during instructional time;
- Access personal commercial, shopping, gambling, or financial accounts through school technology.

Technology activities conducted through school resources shall support educational objectives and reflect school standards.

Photography, Audio, and Video Recording

Students may not photograph, audio record, or video record students, staff members, classrooms, or school activities without the permission of a teacher, administrator, or other authorized staff member.

The unauthorized recording or distribution of images, video, or audio involving students or staff may result in disciplinary action.

Enforcement and Discipline

Violations of this policy may result in:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Temporary confiscation of the device until the end of the school day;

3. Parent/guardian notification;
4. Loss of technology privileges;
5. Progressive disciplinary action consistent with school policies;
6. Additional consequences for repeated or serious violations.

The severity of disciplinary action shall be determined by the nature of the violation and the student's disciplinary history.

Stakeholder Participation and Review

This policy was developed with consideration of input from students, parents/guardians, teachers, school staff, and school leadership.

The Board of Directors shall review this policy at least once every five years and revise it as necessary to remain compliant with applicable law and to support student learning and well-being.

District Limitation of Liability

Walden Academy makes no expressed or implied guarantees that technology services will be uninterrupted or error-free.

The school shall not be responsible for:

- Loss of data;
 - Service interruptions;
 - Damage to personal devices;
 - Financial losses incurred through technology use;
 - Unauthorized obligations resulting from use of personal electronic devices.
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Policy Revised and Adopted: July ____, 2026

Walden Academy Charter School

Willows, California