

North Providence School Department Staff Electronic Device Policy	Approved: 5/26/2021

In order to accommodate the use of cell phones and other electronic devices by all district personnel, the following policy guidelines are established for use of these devices during the workday.

Purpose:

This policy regulates the use of electronic devices in order to ensure uninterrupted instruction, supervision, safety, and work productivity.

Definition:

The term, “electronic devices,” refers to and includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, pagers, hands-free phone apparatus’, smart watches, 2-way (walkie-talkie) radios, hand-held radios, portable devices, and other like electronics.

The term “use” includes, but is not limited to, using an electronic device for phone calls, texting functions, using installed apps such as games, social media platforms, streaming apps, internet browsing, recording devices, and connection to ear buds/headphones.

The term, “misuse,” includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate language, harassment, bullying, threats, video or audio recording without express prior permission of the building principal and of the person(s) subject to recording, and when instructed to cease use of the device by a person in authority.

All North Providence School District personnel may bring personal electronic devices to work; however, these devices are not to be used when the employee is engaged in the instruction and/or supervision of students, or during the workday, unless such use is associated with instructional/work-related activities, as approved in advance by the building principal.

Electronic devices may be used on district property before the beginning of the workday, at the end of the workday, during duty-free planning/preparation or duty-free lunch.

The use of any electronic device, whether privately owned or district owned, must not interfere with an employee’s attention to duty, and must not be used for personal reasons when engaged in instructional settings and/or safety situations requiring the employee’s full attention.

Examples for such includes, but are not limited to:

- engaged in the instruction/supervision of students inside or outside the building
- operation of tools or machinery in labs or workshops
- operation of powered cleaning devices
- operation of district owned motor vehicles
- engaged in the required tasks of the assigned workday

Employees shall not use an electronic device for the purpose of harassing, bullying, or threatening any other district employee, student or community member.

Employees shall not use an electronic device for the purpose of video or audio recording without express prior permission of the building principal and of the person(s) subject to recording. If a recording is needed, it shall comply with any Rhode Island State law pertaining to recording.

This policy does not prohibit the use of an electronic device specifically used at that time for instructional purposes with students when interaction is required for sharing information or live streaming, so long as the guidelines set forth are adhered to.

This policy does not prohibit the use of an electronic device used to interact with an employee's medical device that is worn by an employee because of a condition that requires its use. To be considered for this exemption, the employee must have on file with the Director of Human Resources a signed statement from a licensed physician (MD, DO) prescribing its use.

If the need arises for an employee to make or receive an emergency phone call using a personal cell phone during assigned instructional/supervisory/work times, that information should be communicated to the building principal in advance, if possible. The process for making/receiving personal emergency phone calls during assigned instructional/supervisory/work times shall be established for employees by the building principal.

This policy does not prohibit the use of an electronic device in the event of an emergency when the employee is unable to use their classroom/office phone or classroom intercom to seek assistance.

Personal electronic devices may be connected to the district's Wi-Fi network for educational instructional purposes with advance approval of the building principal and/or Director of Communications and Technology.

This policy shall also be adhered to by any and all contracted educational service vendors who have been approved to work in the North Providence School District.

Misuse of electronic devices may result in appropriate disciplinary actions according to district policy, the NPSD Educator Code of Conduct, and in accordance with disciplinary guidelines/protocols outlined in the employee's respective Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Effective: 7/1/2021