

## USE OF INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

In May 2025, a new law (commonly referred to as “no cell bell to bell”) was enacted that prohibits students from using non-school issued internet-enabled devices during the school day while on school grounds. To support student learning and well-being, and in line with this new legislation from Governor Hochul, Rochester Prep Charter Schools are updating our policy on personal electronic devices. The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge the important role of technology in education while ensuring technology use at school does not present challenges like distractions, mental health concerns, and safety issues. This policy was developed in consultation with Rochester Prep stakeholders, including school leadership and staff, parents and students and in compliance with law.

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Internet-enabled device(s):** smartphone, tablet, smartwatch or other devices capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the use to access content on the internet, including social media applications, including, without limitation, computing devices such as laptops, iPad and tablets; portable music and entertainment devices such as iPod and gaming consoles.

**Non-internet enabled device(s):** cellular phone or other communication device not capable of connecting to the internet or enabling the student to access the internet.

**Parent:** a student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) or person(s) in any parental or custodial relationship to the student, or any individual designated by the parent to act in loco parentis

**School Day:** The entirety of the instructional day (including all non-instructional time during the school day such as homeroom period, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time).

**School Grounds:** All building structures, athletic playing fields, playgrounds or land contained within the real property boundary line of the school.

Students shall not use internet-enabled devices during the school day on school grounds unless such use is subject to an exception set forth in this policy. This policy does not preclude the use of (i) non-internet-enabled devices; or (ii) internet-enabled devices supplied by the school for educational services that are used for an educational purpose.

### Exceptions

1. If authorized by a school leader or other school staff for a specific educational purpose;
2. Where necessary for the management of a student’s healthcare;
3. In the event of an emergency;
4. For translation services;
- 5) Where the use is documented on a student’s: a) Individualized Education Program (IEP); or b) Section 504 Plan.

5. On a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social work or school counsel, for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member;
6. Where required by law.

A parent may make a request under one of the above exceptions to the School Leader. Any healthcare related exception must also include documentation from a healthcare professional affirming such need.

#### On-Site Storage of Internet-Enabled Devices Including Cell Phones

Grade Level	Technology Policies
<b>Elementary School (Grades K-4)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are not permitted to bring cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, or other electronics to school.</li> </ul>
<b>Middle School &amp; High School (Grades 5-12)</b>	<p>School leaders will communicate the procedures for storing and retrieving devices, ensuring that students understand their responsibilities in using the on-site storage facilities provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All internet-connected devices such as Cell Phones and Smart Watches: In the interest of student safety during commuting, students are permitted to bring internet-connected devices to school. However, the following conditions apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Except as noted below, internet-connected devices must be turned off, labeled with student name and homeroom if applicable and securely stowed away according to school procedures.</li> <li>Storage in backpacks and lockers are not permissible storage options.</li> </ul> </li> <li>All high school students are provided with a school-issued Chromebook device. Students need to bring their Chromebook to and from school each and every day.</li> </ul>

#### Methods for Parents to Contact Students During the School Day

During the school day, parents and guardians can call the main office to get a hold of their children. There are landlines in every classroom and in offices making it easy for school staff to get important messages to students.

## **Student Discipline for Accessing Internet-Enabled Devices During the School Day**

Rochester Prep is prohibited from suspending a student solely for accessing internet-enabled devices in violation of this policy alone. Some uses of internet-enabled devices will however constitute a separate violation of the Code of Conduct and or other School policies. Rochester Prep's Code of Conduct outlines consequences and interventions for student policy violations..

## **Security of Devices**

Rochester Prep will exercise reasonable care to maintain the security of devices that are held by the School but cannot guarantee the devices will be secure. Rochester Prep shall not be responsible for any personal device that is lost, stolen or damaged during the School Day or at school-sponsored activities. Any lost, stolen or damaged personal device should be reported immediately to the Director of Operations.

## **Posting and Translation of Policy**

As required by law, this policy will be available in a clearly visible and accessible location on Rochester Prep's website. Translations of the policy into the 12 most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in the state will be provided upon request by a student or parent.

## **Reporting and Mitigation Action Plan**

Beginning September 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, Rochester Prep will publish an annual report on its website detailing enforcement of this policy during the prior school year. This report will include non-identifiable demographic data of students who have faced disciplinary action for non-compliance and analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement of this policy. If a statistically significant disparate enforcement impact is identified, the report will include a mitigation action plan.