



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Personal Electronic Device Policy

Date: November 13, 2024

Priority level: Moderate

Approximate time needed for discussion: 10 minutes

Proposal to be presented to Board of Trustees by: Chris Kusek, Head of School

*Proposal approved as policy by consensus: November 14, 2024*

### **Text of proposal:**

#### **I. Purpose**

This policy aims to establish clear guidelines regarding the use of personal electronic devices ("PEDs") by students during the school day at Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School to minimize distractions, promote a focused learning environment, and ensure the safety and well-being of all students. PEDs include, but are not limited to, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, and portable gaming devices.

#### **II. General Prohibition**

The use of PEDs is strictly prohibited during the school day, unless explicitly authorized by a teacher or administrator for educational purposes. The school day is defined as the period from arrival on school grounds to pick up, including instructional time, lunch, recess, and any school-sponsored activities during those hours.

#### **III. Device Registration and Storage**

- Families who choose to allow their children to bring PEDs to school must register these devices with the school at the beginning of each academic year or when a new device is purchased. Registration will include providing the device type(s), make and model of devices brought to school on a regular basis.
- Students who bring PEDs to school must turn them in each morning at a designated location.
- The school will provide a secure storage system for PEDs, ensuring their safety and protection throughout the school day.
- PEDs will be returned to students at the end of the school day upon dismissal.
- After dismissal, students may use their PEDs to communicate with caregivers regarding pick-up arrangements or after-school plans, but only with staff permission. Otherwise, PEDs must remain off until students have been picked up.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## IV. Consequences for Non-Compliance

Students who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to the following consequences:

- **First Offense:** Confiscation of the PED. The device will be stored securely and returned to the student at the end of the day. A written warning will be issued to the student and a record of the incident will be maintained.
- **Second Offense:** Confiscation of the PED. The device will only be released to a parent or legal guardian. A meeting may be scheduled with the student and parent/guardian to review the policy and discuss expectations.
- **Third Offense:** Confiscation of the PED and a mandatory meeting with the student, parent/guardian, and school administrator. Alternatives to bringing the device to school will be explored, and a temporary ban on bringing the device to school may be implemented.

## V. Exceptions and Special Circumstances

- **Educational Use:** Teachers may authorize the use of PEDs for specific classroom activities or projects.
- **Medical Needs:** Students with documented medical needs requiring the use of a PED will be granted an exception, subject to approval by the school administration and the provision of appropriate documentation.
- **Accessibility:** Students requiring the use of PEDs for accessibility purposes will be accommodated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

## VI. Communication and Education

- This policy will be communicated clearly to all students, families, and staff through the Family Handbook, school website, and other appropriate channels.
- The school will provide education and training to students and staff on responsible PED use, digital citizenship, and online safety.

## VII. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically by the Board of Trustees to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current best practices and legal requirements.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## **VIII. Disclaimer**

The school is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of PEDs brought onto school grounds. Students and families are encouraged to ensure their devices are adequately insured.

## **IX. Enforcement**

This policy will be enforced by all school staff, including teachers, administrators, and support personnel.

### **Goals to be achieved by proposal:**

- Minimize distractions
- Promote a focused learning environment
- Ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

### **Potential Problems/Dissenting Views:**

- Overly restrictive
- Logistical challenges/costs of collection and storage
- Confiscation concerns
- Parent communication