



Norfolk Public Schools

The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

December 20, 2024

Dear Norfolk Public Schools' Parents/Guardians,

The City of Norfolk School Board has approved the Personal Electronic Communication Device/Cell Phone Policy JXXZ, which will go into effect on January 1, 2025. This policy is designed to promote a healthier, distraction-free learning environment by limiting the use of cell phones and personal electronic devices during the school day. Under the policy, students must turn off their devices before entering the school building and store them in their backpacks throughout the instructional day. Any emergency communication for students must occur through the school's main office.

There are allowable exemptions for cell phones and personal electronic communication devices. These exemptions must be documented in a student's 504 Plan (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or Individualized Health Care Plan. For students with medical needs, a medical exemption must be included in one of these plans to meet their unique requirements. If a student with a disability or an English learner has a documented accommodation, such as text-to-speech or translation services, and requires technology to ensure a free and appropriate public education, the IEP, Limited English Proficiency plan, or 504 teams will work together to identify and implement appropriate school-based assistive technology such as communication devices or tablets) to meet the student's unique needs. For students requiring assistive technology, the IEP team or 504 committee will evaluate the features and characteristics of potential tools to identify the most suitable options. During this process, teams will also consider compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), ensuring that decisions do not draw unnecessary attention to the students involved.

We appreciate your understanding and partnership as we work to create a focused and positive learning environment for all students. If you have any questions or need to discuss possible exemptions, please don't hesitate to reach out to the school principal for assistance.