

Book	
Policy Manual	
Section	
Section 5000 - Students	
Title	Prohibition on Internet-Enabled Device Use During the School Day
Code	
5315	
Status	
Active	
Adopted	
July 1, 2025	
Last Reviewed	
July 1, 2025	

PROHIBITION ON INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICE USE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

1. Purpose

This policy, adopted by the Horseheads Central School District Board of Education, establishes a District-wide prohibition on student use of internet-enabled devices during the school day, in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

2. Definitions

Internet-Enabled Devices shall mean any device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including but not limited to social media applications. Such devices shall include, but not be limited to smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, laptops, and other portable electronic communication or computing devices. Internet-enabled devices supplied by the School District that are used for an educational purpose are not included in this definition.

School Day shall mean the entirety of every instructional day, including during instructional and non-instructional time, including but not limited to homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study hall and passing time.

School Grounds shall mean in or on or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of the District.

3. Prohibited Use

Students are prohibited from using internet-enabled devices on school grounds during the school day, except as expressly permitted under the exceptions outlined in this policy.

4. Exceptions

Student use of an internet-enabled device during the school day on school grounds may be authorized in the following limited circumstances as further defined by district regulation:

- a. **Educational Use:** If authorized by a teacher, principal, or the District for a specific educational purpose.
- b. **Health & Safety:** Where necessary for managing a student’s healthcare, or in the event of an emergency.
- c. **Language Needs:** When needed by a student for translation services.
- d. **Student Caregivers:** On a case-by-case basis for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member. Such use will be permitted only upon review and determination by a building administrator together with a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor.

e. **Legal Requirements:** When the use of such devices is required by law.

f. **504/IEP Plans:** Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit or otherwise limit a student's use of an internet-enabled device where such use is included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

5. **Communication and Contact**

The District shall provide at least one method for parents or persons in parental relation to a student to contact the student during the school day. Such contact methods will include, at a minimum, the phone line in the main office of the school in which the student attends. Other contact methods may be identified by regulation issued pursuant to this policy. Written notification detailing how parents or persons in parental relation to a student may contact students during the school day shall be provided to parents or persons in parental relation to a student at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

6. **Storage of Devices**

The District shall provide at least one method for students to store internet-enabled devices on-site during the school day. Storage options will include, but may not be limited to student lockers. Additional storage locations may be identified by regulation issued pursuant to this policy. Alternatively, internet-enabled devices may be left at home during the school day. The district is not responsible for lost or stolen personal devices.

7. **Discipline and Enforcement**

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary penalties pursuant to the District's Code of Conduct and subject to applicable law and regulations. Progressive discipline or restorative practices may be used in cases of repeated violations, consistent with the Code. The district shall publish information regarding enforcement of this policy as required by law.

While students may not be suspended from school where the sole reason is that the student accessed a personal electronic device on a single occasion in violation of this policy, a pattern of insubordination, distraction of the educational environment, and/or engaging in other misconduct while utilizing a personal electronic device in violation of the Code of Conduct or Board of Education policy shall result in discipline, up to and including suspension from school.

8. **Accessibility and Language Access**

This policy shall be clearly posted and accessible on the District's website. Upon request by a student, parent, or person in parental relation to a student, a translation of this policy into any of the twelve most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in New York State shall be provided.

9. **Regulations**

The Board authorizes and directs the Superintendent of Schools to establish regulations implementing this policy.

Book

Policy Manual

Section

Section 5000 - Students

Title

Prohibition on Internet-Enabled Device Use During the School Day

Code

5315 - R

Status

Active

Adopted

August 14, 2025

1. Purpose

This regulation, developed by the Horseheads Central School District Administration, establishes the working regulations for the district-wide prohibition on student use of internet-enabled devices during the instructional school day for all students in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

2. Definitions

Internet-Enabled Devices shall mean any device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including but not limited to social media applications. Such devices shall include, but not be limited to smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, laptops, and other portable electronic communication or computing devices.

Internet-enabled devices supplied by the School District that are used for an educational purpose are not included in this definition.

School Day shall mean the entirety of every instructional day, including during instructional and non-instructional time, including but not limited to homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study hall and passing time.

School Grounds shall mean in or on or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, or land contained within the real property boundary line of the district.

3. Prohibited Use

All students are prohibited from using internet-enabled devices on school grounds during the school day, except as expressly permitted under the exceptions outlined in this policy.

4. Exceptions

- a. **Educational Use:** When authorized by a building administrator for a pre-planned educational need that could not otherwise be completed on a district-provided device.
- b. **Health & Safety:** Where necessary for managing a student's healthcare, or in the event of an emergency as determined by the building administrator.
- c. **Language Needs:** When required by a student for translation services.
- d. **Student Caregivers:** On a case-by-case basis for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member. Such use will be permitted only upon review and determination by a building administrator and the district medical director upon a recommendation from a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor.

e. **Legal Requirements:** When the use of such devices is required by law.

f. **504/IEP Plans:** Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit or otherwise limit a student's use of an internet-enabled device where such use is included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

5. Communication and Contact

Parents or persons in parental relation to a student may contact the student during the school day by calling the main office.

Students may use the phone in the main office of their school to reach parents or persons in parental relation in the case of an emergency as determined by the building administrator.

Both parent and student may also utilize a student's school email address to assist in any needed communication. This communication must not distract a student from education.

These communication options will be provided via a written notification detailing how parents and students may contact each other during the school day at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

6. Storage of Devices

Grade PreK – 6 Any student who brings an internet-enabled device on school grounds during the school day, except as expressly permitted under the exceptions outlined in this policy, will store any internet-enabled devices, powered off, in a bag in the designated bag storage area such as a cubby or locker. The district recommends that students leave these devices at home as the district is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal devices on school premises. All internet enabled devices are not to be taken out, seen, or heard from the start of to the finish of the school day, unless used in accordance with an exception described herein.

Grades 7-12 The district shall provide students an assigned locker to store any internet-enabled devices, powered off, on-site during the school day. A student may also store any internet-enabled device, powered off, in a bag. The district recommends that students leave these devices at home as the district is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal devices on school premises. All internet-enabled devices are not to be taken out, seen, or heard from the start of to the finish of the educational day, unless used in accordance with an exception described herein.

7. Discipline and Enforcement

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary penalties pursuant to the District's Code of Conduct and subject to applicable law and regulations. Progressive discipline or restorative practices may be used in cases of repeated violations, consistent with the Code. The district shall publish information regarding enforcement of this policy as required by law.

While students may not be suspended from school where the sole reason is that the student accessed a personal electronic device on a single occasion in violation of this policy, a pattern of insubordination, distraction of the educational environment, and/or engaging in other misconduct while utilizing a personal electronic device in violation of the Code of Conduct or Board of Education policy shall result in discipline, up to and including suspension from school.

Schools will follow progressive discipline for internet-enabled device infractions as follows:

- a. **First violation:** Warning from staff member or administration. The student is directed to turn device off and put it away in approved storage area.
- b. **Second violation:** Student will receive a conduct referral with a disciplinary penalty. The device will be confiscated from the student and the student's parent or guardian must come to school to retrieve the device.
- c. **Third violation:** Student will receive a conduct referral with a disciplinary penalty. The device will be confiscated from the student and the student's parent or guardian must come to school to retrieve the device. Additionally, for the next thirty school days, the student must bring the device to the main office or district assigned storage area for storage during the school day.
- d. **Fourth violation:** Student will receive a short term out-of-school suspension for three (3) days for continued insubordination to administration and distraction to educational environment. The device will be confiscated from the student and the student's parent or guardian must come to school to retrieve the device. Additionally, for the remainder of the school year, the student must bring the device to the main office or district assigned storage area for storage during the school day.
- e. **Fifth and subsequent violations:** Student will receive an out-of-school suspension for five (5) days or more, dependent on the results of a Superintendent's hearing, for continued insubordination to administration and distraction to educational environment. The device will be confiscated from the student and the student's parent or guardian must come to school to retrieve the device. Additionally, for the remainder of the school year, the student must bring the device to the main office or district assigned storage area for storage during the school day.

8. Expectations for Staff Member Modeling and Behavior

In conjunction with the prohibition of internet-enabled devices for students during the school day, all staff members are

encouraged to actively model responsible technology use. Consistent adherence by staff to the spirit of this policy, by eliminating personal cell device use during instruction time and student interactions reinforces the expectation that the school environment is dedicated to focused learning and engagement. This consistent modeling demonstrates respect for the educational process and for the individuals present, thereby fostering a culture of attentiveness and academic priority within our schools.

9. Accessibility and Language Access

This policy shall be clearly posted and accessible on the District's website. Upon request by a student, parent, or person in parental relation to a student, a translation of this policy into any of the twelve most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in New York State shall be provided.