



AP 139 – USE OF SMARTPHONES/PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

BACKGROUND

Saskatoon Public Schools recognizes the value of educational technology towards improving student learning. In this context, smartphones/personal technology have the potential to be a powerful complement to the learning environment when aligned with responsible use and digital citizenship.

However, a growing body of research points to problematic side effects related to distraction, focus and potential addiction to smartphones. Reflecting Saskatoon Public Schools' strategic plan goals of well-being and engagement, this procedure contends that the visible presence of smartphones in classrooms during instruction will only be permitted when supported by a classroom management plan. This includes passive use, such as listening to music while working in class, to active use, such as online research tied to a curricular outcome. Staff should endeavor to model best practice in their own use of smartphones/personal technology.

The classroom management plan shall be approved by school administration and incorporate the principles of responsible use and distraction management for students.

For the purposes of this procedure, the term 'smartphones/personal technology' shall imply any personal technology such as, but not limited to, smartphones, wearables, tablets, and portable electronic devices.

PROCEDURES

1. Smartphones/personal technology shall be out of sight and on silent mode or off during instruction unless a teacher-initiated classroom management plan has been approved by school administration. Wearable technology may be worn but must be configured to prevent distractions from alerts and/or communication.
2. In the absence of a classroom management plan, smartphones/personal technology should be stored in lockers, bags or left at home. Wearable technology may be worn but must be configured to prevent distractions from alerts and/or communication. While at school, smartphones/personal technology remain the responsibility of the owner.
3. School administration maintains the right to augment this procedure to include non-instructional time (e.g. lunch and recess).
4. Consequences for inappropriate use remain at the discretion of the school.
5. Any other exceptions are at the sole discretion of school administration. Medical documentation may be required.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN PREREQUISITES

To incorporate smartphone/personal technology use in Saskatoon Public Schools classrooms, staff shall undertake the adoption of a classroom management plan that clearly defines expectations for smartphone/personal technology use with strategies that support responsible digital citizenship and self-regulation. Expectations of use during field trips and non-traditional classroom activities should be



included, where applicable. The classroom management plan should be shared with school administration and should:

1. Set clearly defined expectations of what constitutes appropriate use and consequences for misuse.
2. Speak to digital citizenship and responsible use best practices.
3. Speak to distraction management strategies.
4. Include parent communication that outlines the intended use of smartphones.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. Digital Citizenship in Saskatchewan Schools, 2015.

Ribble, Mike. Digital Citizenship in Schools. International Society For Tech, 2011.

Date Last Revised: June 12, 2023