



DISTRACTION FREE SCHOOL POLICY (Bell to Bell)
Board Approved :August 28,2025

USE OF INTERNET-ENABLED DEVICES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY Grades K-5

In May 2025, a new law was enacted that prohibits students from using non-school issued internet-enabled devices during the school day while on school grounds. The law applies to all school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services, and charter schools, including Storefront Academy Charter Schools. This policy was developed in consultation with Storefront Academy Charter School-South Bronx, Harlem, stakeholders, including school leadership and staff, parents and students.

The purpose of our school's policy on cell phones and internet-enabled devices (including smartwatches, tablets, and other personal electronics) is to promote a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment. While we recognize the value and necessity of digital tools in today's world, unrestricted use during the school day can interfere with academic achievement, social development, and student well-being.

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 an 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 teacher, principal or school 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. 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.

Students must be permitted to use an internet-enabled device where the use is documented on an: a) Individualized Education Program (IEP); or b) Section 504 Plan.

A parent may make a request under one of the above exceptions to the Building Principal. 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

Students must store their Internet-enabled devices in designated on-site storage areas during the school day. On-site storage areas may include, but are not limited to, **classroom lock boxes**.

Classroom lock boxes will be kept in the classroom and only the classroom teacher and a member of the operations team will have a copy of the key to access any internet-enabled device.

*Upon entering the classroom each morning, students are required to **power off** their personal devices and **place them in the classroom lock box** provided by the school. This includes cell phones, smartwatches, wireless earbuds, tablets, or any internet-enabled personal devices.*

Storefront Academy leaders will communicate the procedures for storing and retrieving devices, ensuring that students understand their responsibilities in using the on-site storage facilities provided.

Methods for Parents to Contact Students During the School Day

To accommodate necessary communication from parents, parents may use the following methods to contact their student during school hours while adhering to this policy:

Bronx Campus:

Main Office : 646-758-7201

Mobile #: 718-902- 7442

Email: Bronxoffice@storefrontacademy.org

Harlem Campus:

Main Office # : 646-328-9730

Mobile #: 718-664-5200

Email: Harlemoffice@storefrontacademy.org

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

This policy prohibits the suspension of students solely for accessing internet-enabled devices

in violation of this policy. Students who fail to comply with the policy (e.g., hiding devices, refusing to turn them in, using them during the day) will be subject to progressive consequences as outlined in the school's discipline policy. Some uses of internet-enabled devices will constitute a separate violation of the Code of Conduct, other School policies, or in some the most serious cases, the law.

Security of Devices

While Storefront Academy will take reasonable measures to ensure the security of student devices in its possession, the school cannot assume financial liability for any lost, stolen, or damaged items. Any lost, stolen or damaged personal device should be reported immediately to a Storefront staff member.

Posting and Translation of Policy

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

Reporting and Mitigation Action Plan

Beginning September 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, Storefront Academy 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.