

## Responsible Cell Phone Use Procedure

SP-314

### RATIONALE

This policy provides clarity for how students will be supported and our response to infractions with regard to cell phone and social media use at Bearspaw Christian School. This policy is in line with Alberta Education requirements to restrict personal mobile devices and social media use for students during the school day as per [Ministerial Order #014/2024](#).

Bearspaw Christian School recognizes the significance of technology integration into the classroom as a support to exploration of information, creation of meaningful learning materials, and the ability to examine world's beyond the traditional classroom. However, technology comes in many forms and we must carefully weigh its benefits against the many challenges technology presents for students who are meant to be fully engaged in learning each day. It has been proven that cell phones hinder a student's ability to concentrate, to be fully present during instruction, and limit healthy social interaction with peers. With this in mind, this policy is intended to support students by restricting access to personal mobile devices and social media (from all devices) during the school day.

We view student use of cell phones, personal devices, or other electronic devices during the school day as a privilege. Adherence to the guidelines below is essential to maintain an appropriate academic environment and the integrity of the learning experience.

Abuse of this privilege will result in consequences that are in-line with current school behaviour standards and may include, but not limited to confiscation of the device, parent conference, loss of other privileges such as participation in school trips or activities, sports teams and extra-curricular activities or suspension. We want students to demonstrate self control and make the necessary plans to be fully compliant with this policy each day they arrive on campus.

### SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all students at Bearspaw Christian School.

### RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES AND SOCIAL MEDIA AT BCS

1. Cell phones are required to be powered off and stored in student lockers for the day.
2. Cell Phones are not to be brought into the classroom, are not to be kept in backpacks and are not permitted to be accessed during restroom breaks or at any time during school hours (8:25 - 3:10 & Friday 8:25-1:00).
3. Cell Phones are not to be charged or turned on during school hours.
4. Cell phones are not to be used as a payment method during the school day.
5. Smart watches are not to be used during the school day due to the presence of messaging apps and other forms of communication.
6. Earbuds and headphones are not permitted but may be used at the teacher's discretion as they are sometimes linked to student accommodations and can be connected to a computer to view videos and other learning resources during instruction.
7. No social media is to be accessed during the school day. Social Media: means web-based and mobile technologies or applications providing communications through interactive or social dialogue. Examples include but are not limited to apps, weblogs, social blogs, wikis, Internet Forums, instant messaging and social network aggregation platforms, such as Instagram, SnapChat, Discord or TikTok.

## INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

1. All BCS staff will be informed of the policy and will be responsible for upholding the Responsible Cell Phone Use Procedure.
2. The cell phone policy will be shared with students and posted on campus.
3. Students will have this policy presented to them at the beginning of each year and will be encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification.
4. Parents will be informed each year of the policy to ensure our partnership is upheld and we can collectively support the wellbeing of our students.

## EXCEPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1. Exceptions to these guidelines will be made for students who have medical reasons or to support special learning needs. (ISP, IPP, Documented Medical Circumstance)
2. Classroom instruction may require access to personal devices and social media and will be considered by administration and reviewed according to individual subject needs.

## OFF CAMPUS

1. Students who leave campus on a spare or for an appointment may take their phone to their vehicle and use it once they are no longer within campus facilities.
2. Students will be strongly encouraged to engage in intramurals during lunch, participate in outdoor activities and simply visit with friends during the day rather than leave simply to use their phones off campus.

## PROGRESSIVE CONSEQUENCES

1. First Offense: the cell phone will be powered off and taken to the front office where the student may retrieve their device at the end of the day. The infraction will be noted in the behaviour log and the teacher will inform administration.
2. Second Offense: school based consequences including surrendering the cell phone to the front office and may result in service hours, in-school suspension, etc. Parents will be contacted and Administration notified.
3. Third Offense: school based disciplinary consequences will include surrendering the cell phone to the front office and may result in service hours, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, etc. A meeting with Administration, the student and parent(s) to discuss ongoing technology privileges will be arranged and enrollment requirements for attendance at BCS will be reviewed.
4. Fourth Offense: further discussion with parents with consideration given to significant restrictions to technology access and use while on campus. This step may include a suspension from Campus and requirement to use school owned devices with built-in limitations. A behaviour plan/agreement will be put in place and closely monitored.

Note: If any infractions happen with a BCS guest teacher an administrator will be notified and will handle the circumstances directly.