



Purpose/Background

Rocky View Schools is committed to fostering a focused learning environment and engagement during instructional time by establishing clear guidelines for the responsible use of cell phones and personal mobile devices.

Definitions:

Personal Mobile Devices: Any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate with or access the internet, such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop, or smartwatch.

Social media: Platforms and applications that enable users to create and share content or participate in social networking. The RVS digital educational suite (DES) products are not part of the definition of social media for the purposes of this administrative procedure.

Instructional Time – Includes time scheduled for the purposes of instruction, examination/testing, and other student activities where direct student-teacher interaction and supervision are maintained whether on-campus or off-campus.

Procedures

1. This procedure applies to all students within Rocky View Schools.
2. Students are not to use their personal mobile device in school during instructional time, at school events during the school day (e.g., assembly, homerooms, clubs) unless specially authorized by their school's administrator or their teacher.
 - 2.1 Administrators or teachers may permit the use of personal mobile digital devices for specific educational activities on a case-by-case basis. These activities should be planned and structured to enhance learning outcomes.
 - 2.2 The use of school devices is permitted for specific educational activities. These activities should be planned and structured to enhance learning outcomes.
 - 2.3 In the event of an emergency, the principal or designate will communicate acceptable use of personal mobile devices.
 - 2.4 Students with health or medical reasons or special learning needs may be granted permission to use personal mobile devices during instructional time, upon completion of Form AF148A or as indicated in the student's Individualized Program Plan.
 - 2.4.1 Final decisions on medical or health exceptions will be made by school administration.

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3. If students choose to bring personal mobile device(s) to school, they are expected to keep personal mobile devices turned off or on silent and stored during class time unless explicitly permitted for use by a teacher for educational purposes.
 4. Schools, after consulting with school council, may ban the use of personal mobile devices during class breaks, recess, lunch break or while on campus. This decision will be made by the school administrators after consulting with parents via the school council and will be communicated with the students and families annually.
 5. Students are not to use their personal mobile device in school during instructional time unless specially authorized by their school's administrator or their teacher.
 6. Students are strongly recommended to leave personal mobile devices at home. The safest place for storage of personal mobile device is at home. Students who choose to bring personal mobile devices to school do so at their own risk.
 - 6.1 The school assumes no liability for lost, stolen or damaged personal mobile devices.
 - 6.2 Parents/guardians and students assume full responsibility if their device is lost, stolen or damaged.
 - 6.3 Any devices that are brought to school are to be stored in designated places as defined by the school and out of view. All personal mobile devices are to be powered off or placed on silent mode.
 7. Student access to social media platforms on personal mobile devices or school provided devices during instructional/class time is not permitted to ensure students remain focused on educational tasks.
 - 7.1 If an educational outcome requires access to social media site, then the teacher must consult with the principal before considering access to such a site.
 - 7.2 The principal will need to put in a service request to grant temporary access via the school's Wi-Fi network.
 - 7.3 For the purpose of this administrative procedure, platforms and applications that enable users to create and share content or participate in social networking are prohibited. This includes, but not limited to, social media sites include: Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter/X, reddit, LinkedIn, Telegram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitch, BeReal, ClubHouse, Flickr, Tumblr, Yelp, Foursquare, WeChat, MeWe, Kuaishou, Weibo, QQ, LINE, Discord, Threads, Mastodon, Blue Social, Quora, Tencent, Yahoo Groups, Yammer and others as determined by the school division as part of routine social media monitoring.
 8. Personal mobile devices are not to be used in settings such as change rooms, washrooms, private counseling rooms, that have the potential to violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.

9. Consequences for Non-Compliance:

9.1 First Incident:

Action: Verbal Warning

Description: Student is reminded of the expectations regarding responsible use of Personal Mobile Devices and/or social media.

Follow-Up: The teacher will notify the student of the potential consequences for repeated offenses.

9.2 Second Incident:

Action: Confiscation and Parent/Guardian Informed

Description: The student will turn in the Personal Mobile Device to the teacher, and it will be returned to the student at the end of class.

Follow-Up: The teacher will record the incident and inform the student that subsequent offenses may result in more significant consequences. Parent/guardian is informed by the teacher.

9.3 Third Incident:

Action: Confiscation and Parent/Guardian Involvement

Description: The student will turn in the Personal Mobile Device to the office and can retrieve the device at the end of the school day from the office. School administration will document the incident.

Follow-Up: An Administrator will contact the parents/guardians to inform them of the repeated infractions to discuss the issue and reinforce the procedure and to notify of next step.

9.4 Fourth Incident:

Action: Loss of Privileges

Description: For a period of one school week the child will not bring the mobile device to school or will turn it into the office at the beginning of day and retrieve it when they leave for the day.

Follow-Up: A formal letter will be sent home to the parents/guardians from administration outlining the repeated offenses and the disciplinary actions taken. School administration will document the incident.

9.5 Further incident(s) may result in other actions as determined by the administration in consultation with parent/guardian in line with Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Code of Conduct. Further incidents are documented.

9.6 Personal Mobile Devices that are taken temporarily from students by teachers or administrators must be securely stored.

9.7 In all cases, if cyberbullying is evident, a student may be subject to in-school suspension, out of school suspension or other corrective consequences at any point as per Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Code of Conduct.

10. This procedure will be communicated to students, staff, and parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and reinforced through regular reminders.

10.1 Information on responsible personal mobile device use will be made available through school / student handbooks, the school website, and other appropriate channels.

11. This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with provincial regulations and to address any emerging issues related to the use of digital devices in schools.

References:

- Ministerial Order (#014/2024) - Standards for the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools
- Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools Frequently Asked Questions. Alberta Education.
- AP350 Student Code of Conduct
- Education Act Sections 11, 31, 32, 33, 36, 37, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222, 257

APPENDIX A – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does Rocky View Schools believe about the use of personal mobile devices (PMD) in schools?

RVS believes that technology can enhance instruction and learning when supporting curricular outcomes and not being a distraction. RVS teachers will continue to utilize technology when it benefits or enhances the achievement of learning outcomes.

What does Rocky View Schools consider a personal mobile device?

As per the Ministry of Education FAQ “personal mobile device means any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate with or access the internet, such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop, or smartwatch”.

Can my child bring their personal laptop/tablet to school?

Yes. Learners can bring their personal laptop/tablet to school if it is being used for instructional purposes as directed by the teacher. Any misuse of a personal laptop/tablet is subject to the procedures outlined in AP148.

How can parents/guardians contact their child at school?

Allowing your child to text or call during instructional time is a distraction to their learning and the learning of others. Please call the main office and schools will ensure that important messages are passed along.

What if my child has high anxiety and needs to be able to contact parents?

Confidential phone calls can be made from the administration office or the school counsellor's or child development advisor's office. Allowing your child to text or call during instructional time is a distraction to their learning and the learning of others.

Can my child use their PMD during lunch/recess/spares/in the hallway or during non- instructional time or while on the school bus?

Students are strongly encouraged to leave their personal mobile device at home. If they bring it to school, they must leave it in their locker, backpack, or other designated space during instructional time. Personal mobile devices should be powered off or on silent and stored out of view.

During non-instructional times such as lunch, recess, breaks between classes, spares, on the bus students can use their personal mobile devices unless the school has specifically prohibited that usage after consulting parents via the school council. However, if students are cyberbullying or otherwise using their personal mobile devices inappropriately, school staff or administration will investigate and respond appropriately, and consequences may be applied regardless of where or when the device is in use.

Can my child use their PMD while in the washroom?

No.

Can my child use their PMD during extracurricular activities?

Personal mobile device usage during extracurricular events is at the discretion of the teacher or coach and should be made clear to students at the outset of the event. Examples of extracurricular events might include sports, clubs, band concerts, practices, etc.

Can my child use their PMD during WeConnect classes?

Yes, a laptop or tablet can be used for instructional purposes while engaging in the WeConnect online course.

Why are teachers and staff allowed to use their personal mobile devices?

To support instruction and for security/authentication purposes, staff may need to access PMDs. All staff will model good digital citizenship practices and refrain from personal usage during instructional time. Staff may also use social media to make learning visible as per AP144.

Can a teacher take a student's phone?

AP148 outlines the circumstances in which a student's PMD may be confiscated by any staff member.

Can my child use their PMD in an emergency? In the case of an emergency can I contact my child on their PMD during instructional time?

Your child's PMD will be turned off or stored during instructional time. Urgent information is best communicated to your child through the school office. School administration will ensure that school contact numbers are shared with parents and that urgent messages are passed along in a timely and private manner. School Administration are aware that urgent information is best shared in a private and supportive environment.

How do I request an exception for my child who has a health or medical reason that requires the use of their PMD?

Exceptions may be made to address students' individual needs, such as when required for health or medical purposes or as required for the student to meet curricular expectations. For these exceptions, consultation will occur with the school-based team and include the parent/guardian and student.

Final decisions on exceptions will be made by the school administration. If the student has an IPP exceptions will be documented in the IPP. If the student does not have an IPP it will be documented in the medical considerations section of the student's profile within PowerSchool and form AF148A will be completed by the school-based team.

Our school does not have a PMD problem. Why do we have to follow this?

This is a province wide decision made by the provincial government that has been established to ensure that all schools are consistent in addressing unnecessary distractions to learning and pro-social interactions in schools. The Ministerial Order applies to all public schools in Alberta.

What if my child's PMD is lost, stolen or damaged while in the care of a teacher or other staff member?

Students are strongly encouraged to leave their PMD at home. If they choose to bring it to school, the school is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage.