

5516.01 STUDENT USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES
INCLUDING CELL PHONES

To support school environments in which students can fully engage with their classmates and their teachers, and to focus attention upon classroom instruction, the Readington Township Board of Education has determined that the use of cell phones and other wireless communication devices by students during school hours shall be strictly limited.

The objective of this policy is to strengthen the Readington Township School District's focus on student wellness, in alignment with our mission of ensuring all students are empowered to lead purposeful lives with integrity, cultivate a spirit of discovery, and to embrace connections in our diverse, global society.

I. Research

Research shows that student use of wireless communication devices in schools, particularly cell phones, has negative effects on academic performance, focus, and mental health. These devices distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in unnecessary challenges, smaller learning gains, and suboptimal test scores. Increased use of such devices contributes to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in students.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to the use of wireless communication devices by students while on school property during school hours. As used in this policy, "wireless communication devices" includes cell phones and other devices that transmit and receive voice or data via electromagnetic signals without the use of wires or cables, including but not limited to ancillary devices such as smart watches, earbuds, and wireless headphones.

III. Use of Wireless Communication Devices

Students are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during the school day. Students may use wireless communication devices before or after school, while on school buses, or during co-curricular activities (unless the bus driver, principal, or co-curricular supervisor elects to restrict cell phone use for any reason including those cited in paragraph I above). Pursuant to Policy 5516, students are prohibited from recording audio or video at all times, including when they are otherwise permitted to use their wireless communication devices under this policy.



IV. Exception

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit a student from using a wireless communication device for a purpose documented in a classified student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 U.S.C. 794. A student may use a wireless communication device to monitor or address a health condition, which shall be with prior permission of the School Nurse and documented in the student's Individual Health Plan.

V. Cell phone storage

Students shall keep their wireless communication devices silenced and in a secure place, such as the student's locker, at all times when device use is prohibited; provided, however, that students may wear smart watches at all times, but shall refrain from using the devices for any purpose other than timekeeping during instructional periods.

VI. Discipline

Discipline for violation of this policy shall be governed by the Student Code of Conduct and Expectation of Behavior.

Adopted: March 11, 2025

