

Virtual Preparatory Academy

Student Personal Electronic Device Policy

Purpose and Rationale

Virtual Preparatory Academy (“VPA” or “School”) is committed to providing an environment that fosters academic focus, student engagement, and social interaction. Research and practical experience show that personal electronic devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, and wireless earbuds can be a significant distraction in the classroom. Excessive or inappropriate device use contributes to lower academic performance, decreased face-to-face interaction, and increased incidents of cyberbullying and social anxiety.

This policy supports a cell-phone-free learning environment, encouraging students to be present, focused, and engaged throughout the school day.

This policy is adopted in compliance with **Oklahoma Statutes, Title 70, Section 1-126**, as enacted by Senate Bill 139 (2025).

Policy Statement

Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, all students enrolled in the public school district, VPA, shall be prohibited from using **cell phones and personal electronic devices** while on School campus during the instructional day, defined as “**bell to bell**”—from the first bell signaling the start of instructional time to the final bell dismissing students at the end of the day.

Devices must be **powered off and stored** in a student’s backpack, locker, or designated secure area for the duration of the school day unless an approved exception applies.

Definitions

- **Bell to bell:** The time from the first instructional bell of the school day to the final dismissal bell.
- **Personal electronic device:** Any personal device capable of connecting to a smartphone, the Internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or another similar device. This includes but is not limited to: (1) Cell phones; (2) Smartwatches, (3) Smart headphones or earbuds, (4) Tablets, (5) Laptops, and (6) Smart glasses.

School-issued or school-approved devices specifically limited for classroom instruction are not included in this definition.

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Exceptions

Approved exceptions to this policy include:

1. **Emergency use:** Students may use personal devices in an emergency situation as directed by school personnel.
 2. **Medical necessity:** Students who rely on electronic devices for health monitoring (e.g., glucose monitors, seizure alerts) may use them as needed, subject to prior approval by school administration and/or the school nurse.
 3. **Instructional use with staff permission:** Teachers may allow temporary use of devices for specific learning activities.
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Disciplinary Procedures

Violations of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the School's student code of conduct. Progressive discipline may include:

- Verbal warnings
 - Confiscation of the device and parent pick-up
 - Loss of device privileges on campus
 - Additional administrative consequences as appropriate
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Parental Communication and Access

Parents or guardians needing to contact their student during the school day should call the school office. In turn, students may request permission to use a school phone or be called to the office when necessary.

Review and Implementation

This policy shall be reviewed annually. Training and clear communication will be provided to students, parents, and staff before implementation.

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

Legal Reference: 70 O.S. § 1-126 (SB 139, 2025)