



August 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In May, 2025 Governor Hochul announced a statewide bell to bell restriction on personal electronic devices in schools across the state in an attempt to create distraction free schools. As a result, the Board of Education has adopted Policy #5695, Students Personal Electronic Devices which can be found [HERE](#). Beginning this September, and in accordance with the Governor's order, the use of personal electronic devices by students during the school day anywhere on school grounds is prohibited unless such use is included in a student's Individualized Educational Plan or 504 Plan. Students will be required to turn off or silence all personal electronic devices and store them for the entire school day from the opening bell until dismissal in each school building as follows:

- Students in grades K-5: Personal cubby or backpack.
- Students in grades 6-8: School-issued Yondr pouch.
- Students in grades 9-12: School-issued locker or backpack.

Parents will have the opportunity to contact students during the school day by leaving a message with the Main Office of the building where the student attends to request a call back from their child.

Although the recently adopted BOE Policy #5695 broadly restricts the use of all types of cell phone devices, there is a substantial body of research that highlights the negative impact electronic device usage has on young adolescents. It is our duty to provide distraction free school environments that promote our students' academic, social-emotional, and mental well being. Many of the apps utilized via smartphones are designed in such a way that they have an addictive effect. As a result, smartphones have become a constant source of distraction for our students during the school day. It is difficult for them to resist the temptation to scroll through social media, play games, or send and receive text messages. All of this serves to negatively impact their concentration and ability to learn. Moreover, it has become increasingly clear that using smartphones excessively can lead to significant mental health problems.

We understand that this change will spur many questions and concerns, and as a result, we have created this [FAQ Document](#) that we hope will provide you with many of the answers. Should you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your child's principal.

We thank you for your anticipated support of this important initiative.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Kevin R. Simmons".

Dr. Kevin R. Simmons  
Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction