BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCEDURE
PROCEDURE CODE G6RP-CP: MIDDLE SCHOOL CELL PHONE PROCEDURES

Summary
After finding that students continue to struggle with the abuse of smartphones and social media and that the majority of incidents of bullying, hazing, harassment, and other conflicts between students are connected either directly or indirectly to social media, Burlington School District (BSD) has procedures in place to limit the use of cell phone usage by middle school students. The procedures, which limit the presence and use of cell phones during the school day, make our school communities safer and help keep students and staff focused on the reasons we are at school: to learn, to build relationships with others, and to be fully present and engaged members of our school community.

Procedures
Cell phones and "smart" devices (e.g. AirPods, headphones, watches) may not be used by middle school students during the school day.

If a student opts to bring a cell phone or other smart device to school, the device must be powered off during the school day, from the time a student arrives on campus through dismissal. Students have two options for how to store it during the school day:

1) Keep the device (powered off) in their locker for the entire school day.
2) Check the device (powered off) into the locked phone storage locker in the main office for the day upon arrival.

If a student or family is not comfortable with either of these options, the student must leave the device at home. Our middle schools encourage students to use locks to secure their personal belongings in their lockers; schools try to keep locks on hand for students unable to bring their own. PLEASE NOTE: Schools are not responsible for lost or stolen items, including cell phones and other electronic devices.

- If a staff member sees a cell phone or smart device *at any time during the school day*, the device will be collected. Upon collection, the phone will be sent to the office with the owner's name, logged into our records, and stored securely in the office lock box for at least the remainder of the school day.
- If a student violates these guidelines and refuses to turn their phone or device into the office when prompted, the student will be required to go to in-school suspension, while the family is notified.
- **** Students: If you are found with your phone or smart device during the school day, please don't argue, debate, or do anything to make the issue bigger;* please just hand over your phone or bring it to the phone locker, let it be safely locked in the main office, and carry on with your day.

If a student is found using a phone or other device in the school building:
- ***First collection:*** Families/caregivers will be notified that the guidelines were violated, and the student will be able to retrieve their phone from the main office at the end of the day.
- ***Second collection:*** Families/caregivers will be notified that the guidelines were violated a second time and must schedule a conference with school administration before retrieving the phone.
- ***3+ collection:*** Families/caregivers Families/caregivers will be notified that the guidelines were violated a third time and must schedule a conference with school administration and the Office of Equity to develop a longer-term agreement between the school and family that supports student learning.

If the student violates these guidelines and their family is unwilling to support a safe learning environment for all students, a meeting will be convened with the family, school administration, and Office of Equity. ***The student may be suspended until this meeting can take place.***

Common student and family questions
What if there's an emergency or schedule/ride issue and I need to call home?
Students can always use the landline dedicated for student use in the main office as appropriate. We are happy to look up phone numbers for students as necessary and will provide a space to talk to caregivers privately if needed.

What about lunchtime and transitions?
BSD middle schools are phone-free spaces during school hours, in accordance with District procedures and researched best practices. Therefore, cell phones and other devices (i.e. headphones) are not permitted in the cafeteria during lunchtime or in the hallways, bathrooms, or classrooms at any time, including during passing periods.

What if I have an accommodation that involves phone use?
We will seek to meet accommodations related to listening to music via the use of Chromebooks and school-issued headphones or personal headphones. If there is a health plan that involves the use of or access to a cell phone, the school nurse will develop a reasonable plan with the family and school administration and the appropriate staff will be made aware. However, the misuse of a cell phone will result in a review of the plan and a discussion of how/if needs can be met in ways that do not involve the ongoing possession of a cell phone during the school day.

What if I am not using my phone, but a teacher sees that I have my phone in a pocket rather than in my locker, backpack, or the school phone storage locker?
This is a violation of the phone procedure since phones should not enter classrooms, the cafeteria, bathrooms, or any other location besides the designated spaces (backpack, locker, office storage) during the school day. A teacher cannot and will not conduct a search looking for phones, but if a phone is readily visible in your possession, the teacher will remind/direct you to take your phone to your locker or store it in your backpack and should write you a hall pass to do so. If you refuse to store the phone appropriately when asked by staff, the staff member will notify administration, and an administrator will support you in getting the phone to an acceptable location and contact your caregiver.

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