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# **Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Communication Devices**

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## New Policy

Goes into effect January 1, 2025

Covers cell phones and personal electronic communication devices.

A cell phone does not have to have all the features of a smartphone to be a cell phone.

A personal electronic communication device is any device capable of connecting to a smartphone, the internet, a cellular or Wi-Fi network, or directly connects to a similar device. Some examples are smart watches, headphones, earbuds, etc.

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## Why Change

Research strongly suggests that cell phones and similar electronic devices are a distraction that can negatively affect learning. Additionally, these devices are used to intimidate and bully students during the school day.

Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 33. The order provided guidance for cell phone free education in Virginia for public schools.

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# Expectations

During the regular school day, all electronic communication devices will be “stored” away and powered off.

For RCHS the regular school day is from the first bell at 8:25 until the dismissal bell at 3:25.

“Stored” means the devices are not carried on the student’s person. Some options include a backpack/bookbag, student locker, or other designated space in the classroom.

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# Consequences

1st Offense - Warning/verbal reminder of policy

2nd Offense - Parent/Guardian contacted, device confiscated by the teacher, and the student may pick it up in the office at the end of the school day.

3rd Offense - Parent/Guardian contacted, device confiscated by the teacher, and the parent/guardian may pick it up in the office at the end of the school day and have a conference with an administrator.

4th Offense - In addition to 3rd offense consequences: the student is prohibited from having a communication device for 30 days during instructional time. The device may be kept at home or left in the main office during the school day.

Other consequences may include: loss of cell phone privilege, suspension/expulsion

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# Exemptions

Verified need. Examples: medical, learning, translation. Students with these exemptions can only use communication devices for the verified need.

At after school activities.

On the bus, as long as the device is not disruptive or distracting.

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