

STUDENT CELL PHONE AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

The Operating Board of Tech Valley High School (hereinafter referred to as “TVHS”) recognizes that its students may possess Personal Electronic Devices (as defined below in section “I”) that can perform various functions. Such devices can create significant distractions to the school environment and reduce student engagement.

In accordance with New York State Education Law Section 2803, which prohibits the use of “internet-enabled devices” during the school day and on school grounds, TVHS sets forth the following rules and expectations regarding the use of such devices on TVHS property.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Personal Electronic Devices” shall mean and include any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications. Excluded from this definition are any TVHS-issued devices, or devices issued by a student’s home school district, intended for instructional purposes.
- B. “TVHS School Property” or “Premises” shall include but is not limited to: any real property owned or controlled by TVHS, any TVHS work-based learning locations and/or vocational settings, buses and vehicles owned and/or controlled by TVHS, any locations where TVHS sponsored or supervised events may be taking place such as field trips, as well as any buildings, structures, athletic fields, playgrounds, parking lots, and land within TVHS boundaries.
- C. “School Day” shall mean the entirety of every instructional day including but not limited to instructional time, non-instructional time, homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, test and/or assessment settings, detentions, in-school suspensions, in between classes and passing time.

II. PROHIBITED USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ON THE PREMISES

- A. Student use of Personal Electronic Devices is prohibited on TVHS School Property and Premises during the School Day.
- B. Any student who brings a Personal Electronic Device(s) onto TVHS School Property or Premises during the School Day must have such device turned off and put away in a manner consistent with TVHS’s applicable procedures, which may include locked pouches (i.e. “Yondr Pouches”), lockers, a designated locked box and/or cabinet, or a classroom teacher’s designated storage container, for the entire School Day. Exceptions may be granted pursuant to section “III” of this Policy. Prior to each school year, students will

receive the specific protocol and procedures, in writing. Students will be expected to retrieve their Personal Electronic Devices at dismissal time, in a manner consistent with the applicable procedures.

- C. TVHS will exercise reasonable care to maintain the security of any Personal Electronic Devices that are held by TVHS. However, TVHS shall not assume any responsibility or liability for the theft, loss, or damage of any Personal Electronic Devices, or for any unauthorized calls or usage made on or from any such device.
- D. Students may not bring electronic devices into exam locations, including state assessments. Exceptions may be granted pursuant to section “III” of this Policy.

III. EXCEPTIONS AND EXEMPTIONS

A. Students may possess and/or use Personal Electronic Devices as follows:

- 1. In the event of an emergency.
- 2. Where required by law.
- 3. When required for translation services.
- 4. When required pursuant to a student’s IEP or 504 Plan.
- 5. Where necessary for the management of a student’s healthcare, medical needs, or disability. Such requests must be approved by the Building Principal, who will consult TVHS’s School Nurse. Documentation from an appropriately licensed medical or educational professional should be submitted with all such requests.
- 6. If authorized by the Building Principal for a specific educational purpose.
- 7. For students who are routinely responsible for the care and well-being of a family member. Such instances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All such requests must be made to the Building Principal, who will then consult a school psychologist, school social worker, or a school counselor for review and determination.

B. All exceptions and/or exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and decisions shall be made at the discretion of TVHS.

C. During the times of the School Day when students are permitted to possess and/or use Personal Electronic Devices on TVHS School Property or Premises, students must

abide by all TVHS Operating Board Policies, including but not limited to the Code of Conduct (TVHS Operating Board Policy No. 5000).

IV. ENFORCEMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

A. Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of building administrative staff; however, all TVHS staff are expected to assist in enforcement.

B. For students who violate this policy, the following measures will be taken by TVHS:

1. First Instance: The student will be warned, and his/her/their device will be confiscated and stored pursuant to section “II” of this Policy. The student will be permitted to retrieve the device at the end of the School Day.
2. Second Instance: The student will be warned, the parent/ legal guardian will be notified, and his/her/their device will be confiscated and stored pursuant to section “II” of this Policy. The student will be permitted to retrieve the device at the end of the School Day.
3. For Subsequent Instances: The student will be warned, and his/her/their device will be confiscated and stored pursuant to section “II” of this Policy. The student’s parent/legal guardian will be notified, and arrangements will be made with the parent/legal guardian for the return of the device.

TVHS may utilize consequences under the Code of Conduct for continued violations of this policy, including but not limited to referrals, detentions, and exclusion from extracurricular activities. TVHS may also issue assignments to students on the detrimental impact of social media on mental health, smartphones/ electronic devices in school, or other relevant topics.

C. Certain use of Personal Electronic Devices may also constitute a violation of TVHS’s Code of Conduct or other Operating Board Policies. Suspensions will not be issued to students solely for the possession and/or use of a Personal Electronic Device. However, TVHS reserves the right to issue suspensions if a student’s use of any such device violates the Code of Conduct or other Operating Board Policies.

D. In some instances, the use of electronic devices may violate the law. In such instances, TVHS will cooperate with law enforcement as appropriate.

V. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

A. During the School Day, parents and legal guardians (which, for purposes of this policy, shall include any person in a parental relation to a student) may contact their children via the following methods:

1. The preferred method is by calling the main office. The designated telephone number for the main office shall be shared with parents and students prior to the start of each school year.
 2. Parents and legal guardians may also email the designated email address: mainoffice@techvalleyhigh.org.
- B. If a student needs to contact his/her/their parents or legal guardians during the School Day, the student may ask a teacher for permission to use the designated TVHS telephone. To the extent practicable, teachers must obtain permission from the Building Principal before permitting a student to use the designated TVHS telephone; however, in the event of an emergency or at times when the Building Principal is unavailable, teachers may allow students to use the designated telephone at their discretion.
- C. TVHS will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

VI. NOTIFICATIONS

TVHS will publish an annual report on its website detailing the enforcement of this policy for the prior school year with the applicable requirements as stated by New York Education Law Section 2803. TVHS will include the information from this Policy, or a plain language summary, in the student/family handbook and on TVHS's website. Students will also be reminded of this Policy regularly and consistently, especially at the start of each school year and upon returning from breaks.

Upon request by a student or parent, the district will translate this policy into any of the twelve most common non-English languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in the state, as identified by the most recent American community survey published by the U.S. Census bureau.

References: Education Law §2803

ADOPTED: 7/24/2025