



NODAWAY-HOLT R-VII SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Mike Hollingsworth, Superintendent

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Quality Education Today For A Successful Tomorrow



August 1, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On July 9, 2025, Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe signed Senate Bill 68 into law, enacting one of the most significant updates to elementary and secondary education in recent years. This legislation includes over 30 provisions, half of which are focused on school safety. Central to the bill is a statewide initiative to enhance safety and reduce distractions during the school day. One major component of this initiative is a comprehensive ban on student use of personal electronic devices during the instructional day.

This includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, smartwatches, personal laptops, tablets, Bluetooth headphones, and other electronic communication devices. Under Section 162.207, all public and charter schools must implement a written policy, effective beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, that prohibits the use or display of these devices from the beginning to the end of the school day, including during class, passing periods, lunch, breaks, study halls, and field trips. This mandate remains in effect through August 28, 2032.

To comply with this new law, the Nodaway-Holt R-VII Board of Education has adopted Policy JFCD: Student Use of Personal Communication Devices. The full policy is available on the school website under the School Board section. The procedures for enforcing this policy are outlined in both the Junior/Senior High School Student Handbook (page 9) and the Elementary School Handbook (page 11). Below is a summary of each:

Junior/Senior High School Policy

All personal electronic communication devices, such as cell phones, smartwatches, iPods, and tablets, may not be used, displayed, or kept in a student's immediate possession between 8:00 a.m. and 3:40 p.m.

Acceptable options include:

- Leaving the device in a vehicle,
- Powering it off and turning it in to the office,
- Powering it off and securing it in a locker (note: the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items).

All communication between students and parents/guardians during the day should occur through the school office.

Violations of this policy will result in the following consequences:

- First offense: Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and ineligibility for extracurricular participation for 7 calendar days.
- Second and subsequent offenses: OSS and ineligibility for extracurricular participation for 14 calendar days.

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Students will receive a grade of "zero" for any coursework missed while serving OSS.

Students with documented educational or health needs (IEPs, 504 plans, etc.) may be granted exceptions at the discretion of school administration.

Elementary School Policy

This policy applies to any electronic device considered a disruption to learning, including tablets, gaming systems, iPods, and phones.

- Devices may not be used during school hours.
- If brought for bus use, the device must be stored with the teacher or in the student's locker.
- The district is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen devices.

Consequences for misuse:

- First offense: Device is taken to the office and returned to the student at the end of the day.
- Second offense: Device is taken to the office and must be picked up by a parent.

Cell phones are allowed on campus but must be turned off during the school day and turned in to the classroom teacher each morning. Use for emergency purposes must be approved by the building administrator.

We ask that you please discuss this newly mandated policy, and each building's procedure, with your student(s) before the first day of school on August 19, 2025. While we recognize that opinions about student device use vary, we appreciate your understanding that this is a state-level mandate, and our district is required to implement it accordingly.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the school office. Thank you for your continued support and partnership in creating a focused and safe learning environment.

Yours in Education,

Mike Hollingsworth
District Superintendent

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