



September 1, 2024

Importance – High

RESTRICTIONS TO STUDENT PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICE USE AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA ON BOARD NETWORKS AND DEVICES

PURPOSE

St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre aims to balance the benefits of technology with the need to maintain an environment conducive to learning and one that limits classroom distractions to ensure that the educational environment remains focused and respectful for all students and staff.

The use of instructional technology is one way of enhancing our mission to teach the skills, knowledge and behaviours students will need as responsible citizens in the global community. However, any of our community members can be affected by the inappropriate use of mobile devices and social media. They can greatly distract students and staff from engaging in consistent and authentic teaching and learning. We can be impacted by the role it plays in the spread of misinformation, the coarsening of civil discourse, the radicalization of various systems, and the mental health crisis that is especially prevalent among our youth.

In Accordance with the Provincial Code of Conduct set out by the Ontario Ministry of Education, the policies of the BHNCD SB put restrictions on student personal mobile device use and access to social media. These restrictions apply to all students enrolled in schools under the Ontario School Board jurisdiction, including during school hours, on school property, during school-related activities, and on school-provided transportation.

All members of the St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre community **must not** use personal mobile devices (such as cell phones, smartphones, tablets, laptops, and smartwatches) during instructional time except under the following circumstances:

- With the explicit permission of school staff for educational purposes, as directed and approved by an educator.
- For health and medical purposes.
- To support Special Education needs (*Parents/guardians must notify the school administration using the approved process and provide appropriate documentation for such exemptions*).

Personal mobile devices of students in grade 9 to 12 must be stored out of view and powered off (or set to silent mode) during all instructional time as determined by the educator, and in all restricted areas as designated by school administration (e.g. chapel, library, offices). Mobile

devices may be used before and after school hours, and during designated times such as lunch breaks in designated areas.

PROCEDURES FOR WHEN AN EDUCATOR HAS APPROVED THE USE OF PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES DURING INSTRUCTIONAL TIME:

1. Students must adhere to the BHNCD SB - Student Information and Technology Communications Use Agreement.
2. Approved devices must be on silent mode on school property, unless otherwise allowed by an educator.
3. Headphones may only be used with educator permission.
4. External speakers are permitted only at the discretion of the classroom teacher or other staff member.
5. Devices are not to be used for non-instructional purposes such as making personal phone calls, text messaging, and accessing social or gaming media.
6. Devices are not to be used to record, transmit or post images or video of a person or persons on school property during school activities, or school hours unless allowed by a teacher for the purpose of an assignment or lesson or any other actions that are contrary to the Catholic Code of Conduct.
7. Devices may not be used in any areas where an expectation of privacy is anticipated (washrooms, change rooms, etc.).
8. In urgent circumstances a parent/guardian can call the main office if they need to contact their child during instructional time.
9. In urgent circumstances, a student who needs to contact their parents during their instructional time will get permission from their teacher to do so through the office.
10. Charging devices will not be permitted at St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre.
11. Each user is responsible for his/her own device and he/she should use it responsibly and appropriately.
12. St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre takes no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged devices.

PARENT/GUARDIAN TO REQUEST AN EXEMPTION FOR HEALTH AND MEDICAL/HEALTH PURPOSES.

1. Parents/guardians must notify the school administration of their intent to request an exemption from the restrictions.
2. Parents/guardians must provide official documentation to support a medical/health exemption.
3. Exemptions must be approved by the appropriate Family of Schools Superintendent of Education.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT FOLLOWING BOARD AND SCHOOL POLICY:

1. Students are responsible for their personal mobile device, how they use it and the consequences of not following the Board's policy on student personal mobile device use.
2. Where a classroom educator notices a personal mobile device that is not silent and stored out of view, they must require the device be handed in for the instructional period and the device must be placed, by the student, in a storage area in a location in the classroom designated by the educator.
3. Where a staff member notices a personal mobile device that is not stored out of view or not on silent in a restricted area, they must be directed to the office where the student will be required to hand in the device to the principal/vice principal.
4. Progressive Discipline will be used to address infractions regarding the use of personal mobile devices and inappropriate use of social media in accordance with Board Policy 200.09 Catholic Code of Conduct.
5. Where the student refuses to hand in their personal mobile device when required, they will be sent to the Principal's Office. The school principal will consider a range of responses including suspension, to address the student's behaviour.

Thank you for your assistance and support in helping to develop 21st Century Learners working together to develop responsible attitudes, respectful behaviours, and critical thinking skills with our students of St. Mary Catholic Learning Centre.

Sincerely,

Amy Pimentel



Amy Pimentel | Principal

Alternative and Continuing Education

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