Superintendent Dr. Roberto Padilla
Deputy Superintendent Maiysha Etienne
501 Courtlandt Ave Bronx, NY 10451
Phone #: 718-742-6500
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School Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy

Purpose:
To create an environment conducive to learning by minimizing distractions caused by cell phones and other personal internet-enabled electronic devices, ensure the safety and focus of all students during school the school day, and follow Education Law §2803, effective August 1, 2025, all New York State schools are required to adopt a policy that prohibits the use of personal internet-enabled devices during the school day on school grounds. An "internet-enabled electronic device" is defined as an electronic device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet. Examples of such devices include cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, laptops, tablets, iPads, and portable music and entertainment systems.

Policy statement:
Students will not be permitted to use or access their personal internet-enabled electronic devices upon arrival at school until the end of the school day. The school day is defined as the period from the moment students enter the school building until the last class of the day ends, including during lunch. The school day starts at 8:20 AM and ends at 2:40 PM. Students will be able to use school/NYCPS-issued devices during the school day.

1. **COLLECTION/STORAGE**

- Upon arrival, students must power off their devices.

- **PS 161x will provide students with lockable phone cases:**
    - Students will place their devices in the case and secure it in front of school staff.
    - Students will store their locked cases in their backpack for the day.
    - At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouch in the schoolyard.
    - They will remove their device(s) and lock their cases before leaving the school.
    - Students with approved early dismissal will be able to unlock their pouch in the main office.
    - In the event that a storage device, such as a case, is lost or damaged, the school will replace it at no charge, for the first occurrence only. If the same student loses or damages another case, there will be a fee of $20.

2. **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS**

- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, parents or guardians can contact Community Assistant Ms. Vasquez and Secretary Ms. Poole at 718-292-5478 or Parent Coordinator Ms. Jourdan at 347-563-4734, to reach their child.
- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, students may access phones in the main office to reach their parents or guardians.
- In case of emergency or exigent circumstances, the school will use GAMA, School Messenger, and Class Dojo to communicate information to parents or guardians.
    a. Here is how parents/guardians can access the automated messaging system: ensure the school has your correct phone number, connect to Class Dojo, and make sure you have a NYCSA account (instructions here: https://www.schools.nyc.gov/setup-guide).

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3. **EXCEPTIONS**

- Students are allowed to use their device if they have an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan that includes use of an internet-enabled device and do not have a DOE-issued device for such purpose.
- Parents/guardians must contact AP Ms. Lopez at 718-292-5478 if a student requires an exception for reasons such as: medical reasons (for example to monitor blood sugar or other similar circumstances), if student is a caregiver, for approved language purposes (such as translation or interpretation services if no other means are available), or where otherwise required by law.
- Exceptions will be processed and approved within one week.

4. **DISCIPLINE**

- Students who use electronic devices in violation of the NYCPS Discipline Code, the school's policy, Chancellor's Regulation A-413, and/or the NYCPS Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy ("IAUSP") will be subject to progressive discipline. This means that the disciplinary responses will escalate based on the nature and frequency of the violation, including a teacher or guidance conference with the student and a parent phone call, a student conference with an administrator and a parent phone call, and ultimately a parent meeting to discuss the incident and pick up the phone. If a student is seen with their phone 3 times or more, because they did not lock it in the given case, a parent must pick up the phone from the school each time this occurs once it has occurred 3 times. As provided in the State law, a student may not be suspended solely on the grounds that the student accessed a personal internet-enabled device in violation of school policy. Repeated incidents of insubordination (i.e. refusal to surrender or store device) **may** result in a suspension **if approved** by the Office of Safety and Youth Development.

5. **OTHER: If lost or stolen**

- In the unlikely event that an electronic device is stolen or damaged at school, parents can submit a claim to the Comptroller's Office. More information on submitting a claim is available on the Comptroller's webpage.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a focused and productive learning environment. If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding these policies, please do not hesitate to contact Parent Coordinator Ms. Jourdan at 718-292-5478 or 347-563-4734.

Sincerely,

Alana Bibergal

Alana Bibergal
Principal