

# Personal Digital Device Usage Policy

## Rationale

As a school, HCOS: Flex Academy strives to help students be responsible and discerning digital citizens, embracing God's unique purpose for their lives. The purpose of this policy is to create an environment where students are able to focus on learning and developing digital literacy skills without the distractions created by personal digital devices. Additionally, at Flex Academy we place a high value on our in-person learning times and want those times of relational connection to be free from distractions from device usage.

## Definitions

**Personal Digital Devices (PDD):** any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, including, but not limited to, a cell phone, smart watch or tablet.

**Digital Citizenship:** Digital citizenship is the ability to navigate our digital environments in a way that is safe and responsible and to actively and respectfully engage in these spaces.

**Digital Literacy:** Digital literacy is the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies.

**Headphones:** Wired earphones that can be plugged into a computer via an aux cable connection.

## Policy

To ensure an environment that encourages learning, HCOS: Flex will require students to observe the following restrictions while on-site during school hours:

- Grades K-9 will not be allowed to use PDD, such as cellphones at school between the hours of 8:30 am to 3:00 pm
- Grades 9-12 will be allowed to use PDD, such as cellphones during all breaks but not during any class blocks.
- If students are bringing devices on site, all devices must remain in a student's backpack and in silent mode during class time.
- Any emergency communication will be directed through the office or an on-site school administrator if not on campus.
- Students are not permitted to listen to music through wireless speakers (ie. AirPods) but can use wired headphones to listen to instructional videos, music, etc. from their computer during work times

## Exceptions

- Exceptions may be made for students who have documented adaptations or needs, based on an Inclusive Education designation
- Access to a PDD for medical reasons may, after discussion between the school and parent, be allowed as deemed necessary

## Disciplinary Steps

- If a student in grades K-9 is using a PDD on site, the student will be asked to give it to a staff member, and it can be picked up by the student at the end of the day from the main office
- If a student in grades 10-12 is using a PDD on site during class time, the student will be asked to give it to a staff member, and it can be picked up by the student at the end of the day from the main office
- In cases of repeated confiscations, parents may be contacted, and further disciplinary action may be taken

## Release of Liability

HCOS takes no responsibility for loss or damage to cell phones, iPods and any other electronic device. Parents send cell phones to school at their own risk.

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