

Distraction-Free Learning Environment: Phone & Internet Enabled Device Policy

Middle School Policy - Student Handbook/Planner Version

At Community Roots, we believe in fostering a focused, inclusive and distraction-free learning environment. CRCS **students are not permitted to use personal internet-enabled electronic devices during the school day. An internet-enabled device is a** smartphone, tablet, smartwatch and any device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling use of and access to content on the internet, including social media applications. This includes, without limitation, computing devices such as laptops, iPad and tablets; portable music and entertainment devices such as iPod and gaming consoles.

We have the following expectations for all students.

- All **cell phones, smartwatches, and other internet-enabled personal devices** must be **turned off and stored upon** arrival.
- **Internet-enabled devices** should be stored in student's lockers before entering crew/class. Students will retrieve their devices at the end of the school day.
- Students should not use their **internet-enabled device(s) at any time** during the instructional day, including crew, lunch, recess, transitions or in bathrooms.

Why We Have This Policy

This policy supports:

- Student focus and self-regulation;
- A learning environment free of distraction;
- Healthy social relationships and real-time connection;
- Equity in instructional time and classroom engagement.

Exceptions

Use of personal internet-enabled devices may be permitted **only** under the following circumstances:

1. The student has an approved accommodation documented in an IEP or 504 Plan;
2. A medical need has been documented by a healthcare provider;
3. The student is a caregiver and requires an **internet-enabled device** for emergency access;
4. A staff member explicitly authorizes device use for a specific educational purpose.

How Families Can Reach Students

If families need to contact students during the school day, they should call the **Main Office at 718-522-2166**. Students will not have access to their personal phones during school hours.

If a Student Uses a Device Without Permission

We will address phone use with a **restorative approach**, which may include, but is not limited to:

- A reminder and reflective conversation;
- The device being confiscated until the end of the instructional day;
- The device being confiscated and returned to a parent/family member;
- The development of a proactive plan for daily collection of the student's internet enabled device;
- A family meeting.

Note: Community Roots is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal devices.

Elementary School Policy

At Community Roots, we believe in fostering a focused, inclusive and distraction-free learning environment. **CRCS students are not permitted to use personal internet-enabled electronic devices during the school day. An internet-enabled device is a** smartphone, tablet, smartwatch and any device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling use of and access to content on the internet, including social media applications. This includes, without limitation, computing devices such as laptops, iPad and tablets; portable music and entertainment devices such as iPod and gaming consoles.

We have the following expectations for all students.

- All **cell phones, smartwatches, and other internet-enabled personal devices** must be **turned off and stored upon** arrival.
- **Internet-enabled devices** should be stored in a student's bookbag during morning arrival. Bookbags will be stored in student cubbies/closets in their classroom and remain there throughout the day. Students may access their personal device only after they are dismissed.
- While phone use and internet-enabled devices cannot be monitored on school buses to and from school, it is strongly discouraged.
- Students should not use their **internet-enabled device(s) at any time** during the instructional day, including class, lunch, recess, school trips, transitions or in bathrooms.

Why We Have This Policy

This policy supports:

- Student focus and self-regulation;
- A learning environment free of distraction;
- Healthy social relationships and real-time connection;
- Equity in instructional time and classroom engagement.

Exceptions

Use of personal internet-enabled devices may be permitted **only** under the following circumstances:

1. The student has an approved accommodation documented in an IEP or 504 Plan;
2. A medical need has been documented by a healthcare provider;
3. A staff member explicitly authorizes device use for a specific educational purpose.

How Families Can Reach Students

If families need to contact students during the school day, they should call the **Main Office at 718-858-1629**. Students will not be permitted to access their personal phones or internet-enabled devices (including smart watches) during school hours.

If a Student Uses a Device Without Permission

We will address phone use with a **restorative approach**, which may include, but is not limited to:

- A reminder and reflective conversation;
- The device being confiscated until the end of the instructional day;
- The device being confiscated and returned to a parent/family member;
- The development of a proactive plan for daily collection of the student's internet enabled device.

Note: Community Roots is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal devices.