



Personal Mobile Device Policy

Overview:

The Calgary Jewish Academy's "Away For the Day" guidelines apply to all students Kindergarten to Grade 9, and aligns with the Government of Alberta's Department of Education's Ministerial Order (#014/2024) that was announced on June 21, 2024. This policy outlines the standards for the use of personal mobile devices and social media in schools which came into effect on September 1, 2024

What is Considered Social Media:

For the purposes of this policy, social media refers to any app, website, or platform that allows users to communicate, post, or share content with others. Examples include Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, WhatsApp, YouTube, and similar platforms. These are not to be accessed during the school day unless approved by school administration.

Background:

Prior to the June 2024 announcement, Alberta school authorities had the autonomy to set their own policies and procedures with regard to cell phone usage in schools. While policies varied across the province, the Calgary Jewish Academy's stance toward student mobile device usage aligned with the measures that were announced by Alberta Education in June of 2024. As per the CJA Parent Information Guide, and the annual summer newsletter that is sent in July, student use of cell phones is not permitted during the school day. We will continue to be using the "away for the day" model with regards to personal mobile devices and social media.

The Minister defined personal mobile devices as: cell phones, smart phones, smart watches, headphones and other personal electronic devices. It was also announced that social media sites in schools will be restricted. These are steps toward safeguarding student mental health and removing distractions to help students focus on their learning.

Cell Phone Storage:

- Upon arrival at the CJA, students will place their powered down devices in the designated cart or in their locker. The cart will be locked at 8:20 am, and will be unlocked at 3:30 pm dismissal for students to pick up their devices.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use:

- First non-compliance/incident: The device will be given to the teacher and taken to the office. Parents will be informed and the device will be returned to the student at the office at the end of the day.
- Second non-compliance/incident: The device will be given to the teacher and taken to the office. Parents will be informed and the device must be picked up by a parent/guardian at the office at 3:30pm
- Third non-compliance/incident: The device will be given to the teacher and taken to the office. Parents will be informed and the device must be picked up by a parent/guardian/grandparent at the office at 3:30pm. For the following month the device must be left at home or dropped at the office each morning and picked up at the end of the day.

After the third incident, additional disciplinary action will be determined if necessary for repeated violation.

Communication Between Students and Parents/Guardians:

- Parents are asked to refrain from contacting their child/student on their personal mobile device (PMD) during the school day. Parents can contact the CJA office who can facilitate contact with their child/student during the school day if needed.
- This policy was shared with students, staff, and parents each September, and will be re-shared whenever updates are made.

Exceptions:

There may be exceptions granted by CJA Administration allowing students to use personal mobile devices during the school day to accommodate specific needs.

- Medical - Students with identified health or medical needs may require a PMD to monitor conditions throughout the day.
- Complex Learning Needs - Students with specialized learning requirements may require the use of a PMD during instructional time. These accommodations will be outlined in a student's Individualized Program Plan (IPP).
- Educational Purposes – Circumstances that require access to PMDs as determined by school administration. I.e: English as Additional Language Learners (EAL) accommodations.