

## **Telecommunications Waiver Requests**

### **Overview for JCPS Board of Education Work Session—August 26, 2013**

**Issue:** Eight JCPS High Schools are asking for a waiver of the district's ban on telecommunication devices in schools, as stated in our Code of Conduct.

#### **The Schools Submitting Requests are...**

**Ballard High School  
duPont Manual High School  
Fairdale High School  
Iroquois High School  
Seneca High School  
Southern High School  
Valley High School  
Waggener High School**

**Overview of Waiver Requests:** There is some variance among the requests from JCPS Schools, however, most include the following:

- **Permit students to use inside the classroom for instructional purposes**
- **Allow students to have access during lunch and passing time to use for instructional, organizational and research purposes only**
- **Students will be provided with devices or other tools in place of the device whenever they do not have a device of their own**
- **Communication of school wide policy and telecommunications expectations will be clear to all students and staff**
- **The primary use of the telecommunications device will be as a learning tool**

### **Analysis of Research Associated with the Telecommunications**

#### **Pew Research Report—"How Teachers Are Using Technology at Home and in Their Classrooms"**

- 73% of Advance Program and National Writing Project Teachers say cell phones have become a part of their classroom teaching and assignments.
- July 2011 Survey found that 77% of 12-17 year olds have a cell phone
- 95% of the AP and NWP Teachers who say they use phones (that 73%) allow students to do research on their phones.
- 79% have students access or download assignments on phones
- 71% of teachers say managing student cell phone use in class is "an issue"
- The AP and NWP teachers most likely to say it is a "major issue" are those teaching in urban areas (37%).

- 54% of the AP and NWP teachers say all or almost all of their students have access
- AP and NWP Teachers are concerned about a digital divide across schools, but many also say that technology use has “narrowed the gap” between the most and least academically successful students (44% say it is narrowing the gap; 56% say digital technologies are leading to greater disparities)

## **Overview of the RESEARCH ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS—What Are Other School Districts Doing?**

### **Other Large Urban School Districts in America—**

1. **Palm Beach County Public Schools (Fla)**—permits cell phone possession as long as the device is not turned on at any time during the day unless the Principal allows it (i.e. before school or at the end of the school day communications with parents). The only other acceptable uses are the following:
  - Instructional or Educational Purposes—“cell phone and other wireless communication devices may be used during a class period or school activity when specifically approved by the principal in conjunction with educationally appropriate objectives.”
  - IEP, 504 or Health Care/Medical Plan
  - Health, Safety or Emergency Reasons
  - School Trips or School sponsored activities—at the discretion of the principal.
2. **Chicago Public Schools**—“a principal may allow students to possess cellular phones or other information technology devices by creating a school policy identifying when the items may be authorized, used and how they must be kept.
3. **Los Angeles Unified School District**—“Students are permitted to possess cellular phones, pagers or electronic signaling devices on campus provided that any such device remain “off” and stored in a locker, backpack, purse, pocket, or other place where it is not visible during normal school hours or school activities. An exception may be granted by the site administrator for purposes related to the health needs of the student.
4. **Clark County Public Schools (Nevada)**—“The Board of School Trustees recognizes that student owned or student provided personal technology and communication devices can enhance instruction and student achievement.... “During the instructional day, students may only use these devices with the approval of the principal.”
5. **New York City Department of Education**—“Cell phones, iPods, beepers and other communication devices are prohibited on school property. However, a principal may grant permission for a student to bring a cell phone into the school building for medical reasons.”

6. **Fairfax Public Schools (Virginia)**—"BYOD" (Bring Your Own Device)—students identify and register their devices and parents must waive school liability for damages.
7. **Atlanta Public Schools**—High School Students ONLY are permitted to bring electronic devices. The devices can only be used before and after school, not during the school day.
8. **North Alleghany School District (Pittsburgh, PA)**—"...permitted only under the direction of the classroom teacher."

**Other Schools/Districts that are piloting BYOD Policies:**

Paso Robles, California

Oak Hills Local School District, Cincinnati, Ohio

Booker T. Washington High School in Pensacola, FL.

Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia Beach, VA.

**In Kentucky—**

- **Fayette County Public Schools**—defines them as "personal electronic devices... and includes any device that can connect to a network or cellular service, or is a laser pointer."
  - The policy states, "Personal Electronic devices can be used by students during the school day with teacher permission for instructional purposes."
  - It defines clearly that the devices shall not be used in any way that disrupts instruction or for "peer to peer networking." It also states consequences for violation of the policy regarding the telecommunications rules; however it allows the principal to "make exceptions to this policy on a case by case basis."
- **Oldham County Public Schools**—"The use of personal computing devices must adhere to the Oldham County School Acceptable Use Policy." This policy states that electronic devices must be used for educational purposes only and "the owner of the personally owned computing device is personally responsible for the equipment as well as all security, maintenance and repair."
- **Bullitt County Public Schools**—states first, "Technology and technology empowered students are here to stay." Page 1 of the BCPS Personal Device Usage Guidelines refers to the process as BYOD (Bring Your Own Device).
  - "The student is only allowed to use their personal device with the permission of the Principal and/or the teacher. When students are not utilizing personal devices for educational purposes, they should be stored in a secure place..." Students should take their personal devices home every day after school, regardless of whether or not they are needed.
  - Parents sign a "Personal Device Usage Guidelines" form that states the school is not responsible for the device or any actions taken with the device.

**Additional Source: Cell Phones in the Classroom: A Practical Guide for Educators, by Liz Kolb**