

Johnston Public Schools
Personal Electronic Devices

The Johnston School Department recognizes that while cellular devices can have some educational value, this is outweighed by the disruption they cause to the learning environment. Therefore, students are prohibited from operating personal electronic devices for the purpose of but not limited to the use of the text messaging, video recording, and photographing functions, on school property during school hours unless an exception is granted and written into the individual student's identified plan pursuant to R.I. Gen Law § 16-21-43(a)(2). Personal electronic devices must be concealed according to individual school guidelines during school hours. Communication with parents and/or guardians shall be facilitated through the school's main office.

For the purpose of this policy and in conformance with R.I. Gen. Law § 16-21-43(b) a personal electronic device means a smartphone, mobile phone, tablet, computer, smartwatch, or other electronic devices not owned or provided to a student by a public school that is capable of communication through the internet or a wireless network, including but not limited to AI smart glasses.

Additionally, pursuant to Rhode Island General Law Section 16-21-43, students are not permitted the use of a personal electronic device during the course of the regular in-person school day, including lunch and passing time.

Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Law § 16-21-43(d) no school official, employee, or agent of the school shall search the contents of any personal electronic device that is retained by the school during school hours and not in the student's possession in a locked pouch or container.

Failure to adhere to these regulations will result in the confiscation of the device. For a student's first offense, the device will be confiscated by the school and returned at the end of the day. For the second and each subsequent offense, the devices will be confiscated by the school and returned only to a parent or guardian.

The Johnston School Department is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage of any personal electronic devices, nor will the Department be held responsible for the unauthorized use of any cellular phone.

Adopted: January 13, 2026
Johnston School Committee