

Electronic Devices in Schools

2025 Legislation

During the 2025 legislative session, several bills were introduced that addressed the use of electronic device in North Dakota schools. One bill was successful in its passage, HB 1160, which became law.

Key Components

- Personal electronic devices are any portable electronic device that is capable of communication by voice, text, or other data with one or more parties or devices.
 - This includes smartphones, cell phones, Bluetooth-enabled devices, tablets, smartwatches, wearable devices, and gaming devices.
 - The does not include school-approved devices or school-owned devices provided to a student.
- Instructional time is from the start of the school day until dismissal time.
 - Many districts consider this to be the bell that indicates the start and end of the school day.
- Students may have access to electronic devices if they are leaving the campus for a portion of their school day.

The statute also contains definitions of school, school-related activity, and student, which may be helpful if there are questions that arise in individual circumstances.



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School District Requirements

Schools must adopt and implement a policy which:

- Requires all personal electronic devices to be:
 - Silenced or turned off,
 - Securely stowed away, and
 - Inaccessible to students during instructional time.
- Schools may limit or allow student access outside of instructional time, during school-related activities.
- Includes enforcement provisions to ensure strict compliance with the policy by students and school employees.
- Schools must provide an electronic device that is available to students, should there be a need to contact a parent during instructional time.

Exceptions

A school may not prohibit a student from possession or using a personal electronic communication device if:

- A medical provider licensed under Title 43 determines the possession or use of a device is necessary for the health and well-being of a student; or
- The possession or use of a personal electronic communication device is required by a student's individual education plan under IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Additional Resource

- [NDCC 15.1-07-41. Personal electronic devices – Prohibition during instructional time.](#)



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