

Personal Electronic Device Use at RGMS

2019-20 School Year Policies and FAQs

OLD POLICY: Ready to Learn (off and away unless on and academic with permission) versus Personal Time (free use before school, during passing time and during lunch)

NEW POLICY: Off, Away & Invisible All Day starting at 9:05 AM through 3:45 PM and in SUN School

Why the changes?

RGMS is joining other PPS middle schools to decrease device use due to cyberbullying, sexting, social media, addiction, distraction and other negative aspects of these devices. Excessive use of personal devices inhibits adolescent development of the prefrontal cortex (which regulates impulse control). The new policy preserves the entire school day for instructional purposes and healthy social interactions.

What constitutes a “personal electronic device”?

Any student-owned electronic device with a cellular or internet connection, and gaming devices. This includes all cell phones, tablets, watches, laptops, and whatever they invent next.

What about earbuds and headphones?

Wireless earbuds (AirPods and such) are prohibited on campus during the school day and at SUN School. Corded headphones and earbuds are Off, Away & Invisible All Day except in technology class where they are required for class use and stored in that room. Otherwise, they need to be put away.

Can students wear Apple watches?

The same rules apply as with other digital devices: Off, Away & Invisible All Day. Analog devices such as regular watches and pedometers can be used instead and are encouraged.

Where will devices be stored during the day?

As per PPS policy, personal devices are completely the responsibility of the student, not the school. Students are expected to put devices away as they would any other personal belongings at the 9:05 AM bell. The bottom line, they must not be used after 9:05 AM.

Why the 9:05 AM start time each day?

With students arriving over a long period of time to school via different means, it would be impossible to enforce the Off & Away rule until that time. This is a good time for families to make plans for the day.

What help does RGMS need with this?

If students are bringing devices, please be very clear about what will happen if a device is confiscated. We have parent-student agreement forms on the RGMS website that can help navigate the rules.

How will parents and students communicate during the school day?

Please make all family plans before 9:05 AM and only use the main office message delivery service for emergencies as it is disruptive to classes. Delivery of messages will be limited to before lunch and at the end of the day except in cases of emergency. Students can use the phone in the main office to contact home during personal time.

What happens if the rules are broken?

The device will be confiscated, collected by an administrator or designee, stored in a secure locker in the office, and recorded. On the first violation, a parent can authorize their child to pick up the device at the end of the day through the main office after the child fills out a problem solver. All future confiscations will require this procedure, but device pick-up will be only by a parent or other adult identified on the school registration form. Multiple violations will result in device prohibition or lock-up at school. The main office is open from 8-4:15 daily and devices must be picked up during that time.

How will parents be informed about confiscation?

The student will be responsible to contact their parent. There are telephones in the main office for student use. Please be sure your child knows your phone number and that your contact information is kept current in ParentVue.

What will students who usually play on their phones do at lunch instead?

Students will have opportunities to interact and have fun with their peers in a digital-free environment. SUN School will partner with RGMS staff through our Fuel Up to Play 60 and PBIS programs to offer lunchtime activities. Parents are encouraged to consider volunteering during lunch.

Will video games be allowed?

Playing video games is not allowed at RGMS, including in the SUN Room or library, and during SUN School. Wii games will be available in the SUN Room. There are many non-digital games and activities available in the library and SUN Room and other common spaces. Students can only use school computers and accounts for school assignments.

What about students with disabilities?

Modification to the device use policy will be decided through the IEP and 504 team process.