

The Renaissance Charter School Personal Electronic Device Policy

Effective: 9/2/25

In accordance with the **New York State Distraction-Free Learning Environment Law**, The Renaissance Charter School is committed to fostering a focused and respectful academic environment. This policy outlines expectations and procedures regarding the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices on school grounds.

Purpose of the Policy

The intention of this policy is to eliminate distractions caused by personal electronic devices during the school day, enhance student engagement, promote social interaction, and support academic achievement. This aligns with New York State's directive to maintain safe and distraction-free learning environments in all public and charter schools.

According to the NYS law:

- Personal electronic devices, including phones, tablets, smartwatches, and earbuds, must not be used by students during the school day, unless explicitly directed by a teacher, with permission from an administrator, for educational purposes.
- Devices must remain **off and out of sight** during instructional time and throughout the school day. At TRCS, students in Grades 6-12 must store these devices in their locker. In grades K-5, students will place their device(s) in a school-provided storage container.
- Exceptions may only be made in cases of documented educational or medical need including in compliance with a student's IEP or 504 Plan, as otherwise authorized by a teacher, principal, for a specific educational or emergency purpose, or where otherwise authorized by law.

Communication Guidelines for Families

To ensure that students remain distraction-free, families should use the following communication methods:

- **In case of an emergency or urgent need:** Please call the **main office** at 718-803-0060.

- **For non-urgent communication:** Families may email their child using the student's school-issued email address.
- **If a student needs to contact home:** They may request permission from their teacher to visit the main office to call home or may send an email using a school computer.

Student Responsibilities

- Students must have all personal electronic devices turned off and securely stored away before or upon entering the school building.
- This policy applies to all areas of the school, including classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, bathrooms, and shared common spaces.
- It also extends to all after-school programs and extracurricular activities, unless otherwise specified by the supervising staff member.
- If a staff member sees a device being used or visible during the school day, the student will be asked to turn it over immediately.

Device Collection and Pick-Up Procedures

- Confiscated devices will be secured in the main office.
- **Devices may be picked up by a parent or guardian only on Tuesdays and Fridays, between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM.**
- Students will not be allowed to retrieve their own devices.

Refusal to Comply

If a student refuses to turn over their device upon request, disciplinary consequences may be issued in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct. Repeated violations may result in additional disciplinary actions. No student will be suspended if the sole grounds for the suspension is that the student accessed an internet-enabled device in violation of the policy.

We appreciate the cooperation of our families in supporting this policy and helping maintain a distraction-free learning environment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the main office.