



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MEMORANDUM

To: Principals/Vice-Principals

From: Shawn Lehman, Superintendent of Instruction
Mary Jane Farrish, Superintendent of Instruction
Sandy Owens, Manager, Business and Learning Technologies
Colin Anderson, System Principal, Safe Schools
Erin O'Grady, Vice Principal, Business and Learning Technologies

Date: 6 September 2019

Re: **Cell Phone and Personal Mobile Device Restriction - Updated Policy/Program
Memorandum 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct**

The Ministry of Education recently released guidelines regarding the restrictions of cell phones and other personal mobile devices in the classroom. The Ministry defines a personal mobile device as “any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or access the Internet, such as a cell phone or tablet.” The memorandum states: To help ensure students can focus on learning, the [Provincial Code of Conduct](#) has been updated to address the use of cellphones and other personal mobile devices during instructional time unless they are required:

- for health and medical purposes,
- to support special education needs, or
- for educational purposes, as directed by an educator.

While this new Ministry of Education requirement will come into effect on November 4, 2019, this directive is reflective of OCDSB’s current approach to the use of cell phones and personal mobile devices in schools and as a result, we foresee little change, if any, in the application of the regulation in OCDSB’s learning environments. The OCDSB has current policies and procedures in place that includes the criteria shared by the Ministry of Education for cellphone use in classrooms. These include [P.100.IT Appropriate Use of Technology](#) , [P.125.SCO - School District Code of Conduct](#) and the related

procedures. Business and Learning Technologies and Safe Schools will review current policies to ensure they align with this directive.

The District recognizes the benefits that technology can bring to support student learning through the use of applications that foster critical thinking, engaging students with opportunities outside the school to enhance and extend learning, facilitating staff development through on-line modules, communication with stakeholders, and other administrative and operational activities.

To assist teachers with managing the new restrictions in the classroom, Business and Learning Technologies staff will be providing resources including classroom visual supports, training videos and [digital citizenship resources](#). We expect these resources will be available for schools prior to the end of October.

A helpful resource for parents in supporting their child with the use of cellphones and mobile technology is Media Smarts www.mediasmarts.ca/four-tips-managing-your-kids'-screen-time.

The Ontario Ministry of Education has created a Q&A for parents and guardians, which can be found here: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/personal-mobile-devices-in-school-parent.pdf> (PDF)

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Sandy Owens via email or at ext. 8677 or Colin Anderson at ext. 8749.

cc: Senior Staff
Corporate Services
Union Presidents