



August 30, 2024

Dear Queen Mary parents/guardians,

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, we must address some important changes regarding the use of personal digital devices (PDD). A PDD is any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or access the Internet, such as a cell phone or a tablet.

For the safety and well-being of students, and to create a more focused learning environment, the Ministry of Education requires all schools in the province to restrict student use of cell phones and other personal digital devices while at school.

As previously communicated by the Superintendent of Schools, the North Vancouver School District (NVSD) is focused on “devices off, learning on.” In preparation for the 2024/2025 school year, I would like to share with families changes made to the NVSD Code of Conduct and Queen Mary’s Code of Conduct related to PDDs.

The following guidelines will be in place for this school year district-wide and are part of Queen Mary’s revised Code of Conduct:

All students in the school community are expected to leave personal digital devices at home, in their bag/backpack, and/or in their locker during instructional time. Allowances may be made by the staff for instructional purposes, digital literacy, appropriate use based on age and developmental stage, accommodations within a student's Individualized Education Plan, accessibility, medical and health needs, and/or equitable support for learning outcomes.

Starting this September, in all NVSD elementary schools, there will be no student access to or use of PDD at any time on the school grounds or in the school during the school day. This is essentially a “bell-to-bell” restriction from the beginning to the end of the instructional day. Parents are reminded that elementary students are always under direct supervision and that the school will communicate with home for emergent needs if they arise. During the instructional day parents/guardians can call the school office (604-903-3720) to communicate any urgent messages that need to be relayed. If there is a need to speak with your child directly in a timely manner, we will arrange for your child to use our school phones to connect with you.

As referred to in the above guidelines, students with specific educational or medical needs outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Learning Support Plan (LSP) will continue to use PDD to support their educational or medical needs. If you have a child that has these identified needs and you have questions pertaining their specific plans, please contact your child’s case manager.

Queen Mary staff members are committed to enabling focused instructional time, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we strive to create the best possible educational environment for all students. We look to parents/guardians and family members, as well as community members, to model, support, and educate students on what it means to be a responsible digital citizen. Please find listed below some resources that may be helpful for engaging in continued conversations about the safe and responsible use of technology:

- [Digital media: Promoting healthy screen use in school-aged children and adolescents | Canadian Paediatric Society \(cps.ca\)](#)
- [Online safety - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Welcome to MediaSmarts | MediaSmarts](#)

Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wilson
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