



THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
1577 Wall Street East, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 2S5
Telephone: (204) 775-0231
FAX: 774-6211

MATT HENDERSON
SUPERINTENDENT

August 30, 2024

Dear Families,

Re: Mobile Device Expectations

Recently, Manitoba Education directed all school divisions to revise mobile device policies and practices. Mobile devices include smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses, and tablets*.

Beginning September 4th, the following expectations pertaining to mobile devices will be maintained **while learners are on campus**:

Early Years & Middle Years (Devices should be left at home, in lockers, or designated areas in schools, like phone hotels)

- Children in K-8 will not be permitted to have mobile devices
- Children in K-9 schools will not be permitted to have mobile devices
- Children in 7-8 schools will not be permitted to have mobile devices
- Children in 7-9 schools will not be permitted to have mobile devices
- Children in grades 7-8 in 7-12 schools will not be permitted to have mobile devices

Senior Years (Devices may be used at lunch or at breaks)

- Children in grades 9-12 will not be permitted to have mobile devices in class. This means that mobile devices should be left in one's backpack and the devices should not be visible.

Adults

- It is expected that all adults in WSD will model appropriate use of mobile devices and that mobile devices will not be used in the presence of children.

WSD invites all families to be partners in this new direction. Mobile devices cause significant disruption to development, learning, and good mental health and we all need to support each other. Devices and many apps are created to be addictive and WSD staff are always engaged in designing powerful experiences for learners that will cultivate joy (passion), love (belonging) and rigour (deep thinking) in all our learners.

As partners, we ask families to help reinforce this new direction and to have open discussions with your children about the impact of mobile devices, apps, and social media. This is an “all hands-on deck” project for our society, and we all need to communicate openly and honestly.

WSD is focused on implementing the new direction in an educative manner, not in a punitive way. We will work with learners and staff to learn about the impacts of apps, social media, and devices and to develop a critical mind related to who gains from our addiction.

WSD has also purchased 1600 devices this summer and is upgrading its network to ensure that

all learners have access to state-of-the-art technology that is designed to provide opportunities for creation, not consumption. But as an educative community, we are also cognizant of limiting screen time for learners and staff.

The Board of Trustees is currently working to update its policies related to the respectful use of technology and has until November 1st to send this to Manitoba Education. In the meantime, we invite families and learners to offer feedback through the survey links below:

[Family Survey](#)

[Learner Survey](#)

There may be exceptions for learners who have medical concerns. Please connect with your school principal should your family require an accommodation. In the meantime, I appreciate your partnership as we attempt to put the horse back in the barn and give back the experiences our kids deserve and need.

Have a fantastic start to the year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Henderson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Henderson,
Superintendent.

*Some specific programs may demand use of tablets. Schools will assess this one learner and one program at a time.