Vista Charter School: Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Device Policy

This policy establishes procedures and expectations regarding student use of cell phones and personal electronic devices at Vista Charter School in Montrose. In alignment with Colorado law, this policy supports a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment while recognizing the educational value and appropriate use of technology.

1. Scope and Definitions

Scope: This policy applies to all students enrolled at Vista Charter School during school hours, on school property, while participating in school-sponsored activities, and during off-campus events under school supervision.

Personal Electronic Devices: Includes cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, earbuds, headphones, and other electronic communication or internet-capable devices.

Instructional Time: Any scheduled class period, academic activity, advisory, assembly, testing environment, or teacher-directed educational activity.

Educational Use: Teacher-approved use of electronic devices for instructional purposes directly related to classroom learning objectives.

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2. General Expectations for Use

Vista Charter School maintains a learning environment designed to maximize student engagement and minimize disruptions.

Students are expected to:

- Keep cell phones and personal electronic devices turned off, silenced, or on "Do Not Disturb" mode during instructional time.
- Store devices in backpacks, lockers, or teacher-designated locations during class periods unless authorized.
- Use technology responsibly and in a manner that does not interfere with instruction, school operations, or the educational experience of others.

School staff maintain discretion regarding classroom expectations and implementation procedures.

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3. Permitted Use of Devices

Students may use personal electronic devices under the following circumstances:

- During designated lunch periods and approved breaks
- Before and after the school day
- During emergencies with staff permission
- For teacher-directed instructional activities
- For documented accommodations outlined in a student's educational plan when applicable
- When possession and use are necessary as an effective communication accommodation under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.);
- To comply with a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), as defined in Section 22-20-103, or a student's Section 504 Plan, as defined in Section 22-20-123;
- To monitor or address a student's medical condition.

Staff members may limit or expand classroom use based upon educational needs and instructional objectives.

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4. Prohibited Use of Devices

The following activities are prohibited during school hours unless expressly authorized:

- Texting, phone calls, gaming, or social media use during instructional time
- Recording audio or video without permission
- Photographing students or staff without consent
- Cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or inappropriate electronic communication
- Academic dishonesty, including cheating or unauthorized use of artificial intelligence or online resources
- Any use that substantially disrupts instruction or school operations

Electronic device use that violates student conduct policies may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

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5. Progressive Discipline Procedures

Violations of this policy may result in progressive consequences, including:

First Violation:
Verbal warning and review of school expectations.

Second Violation:
Device confiscation for the remainder of the school day and parent/guardian notification.

Third Violation:
Device confiscation and required parent/guardian conference with administration.

Repeated or Serious Violations:
Additional disciplinary action may be assigned consistent with Vista Charter School discipline procedures.

School administration reserves discretion to modify disciplinary responses based on circumstances involving safety concerns, repeated misconduct, or severity of behavior.

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6. Emergency Communication Procedures

During emergencies:

- Students may request permission from staff to access a personal device.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the school office directly regarding urgent matters.
- School personnel will facilitate communication with students as necessary.

These procedures are intended to ensure accurate communication and preserve safety during emergency situations.

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7. Student Responsibility and Liability

Students are responsible for the security, care, and proper use of their personal electronic devices.

Vista Charter School assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, damaged, or misplaced devices brought onto school property.

Students bringing devices to school do so at their own risk.

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8. Review and Amendments

This policy shall be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to ensure compliance with state law, school operational needs, and best practices for student learning environments.

Legal References:

- C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 (Board Authority Regarding Student Conduct and Discipline)
- C.R.S. 22-87-101 et seq. (Bullying Prevention and Education)
- C.R.S. 22-1-124 (Safe School Environment Requirements)
- C.R.S. 24-90-119 (Student Privacy and Technology Use)
- C.R.S. 22-32-109.5 (Student Discipline and Conduct Policies)
- 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.

Adopted: [Insert Date], 2026