

Sec. 1. DEFINITIONS

“Personal communication device” means:

- A telephone;
- A cell phone, such as a smartphone or flip phone;
- A tablet;
- A smartwatch;
- A radio device;
- A paging device; or
- AI glasses or smart glasses; or
- Headphones/AirPods/earbuds; or
- Any other electronic device capable of telecommunication or digital communication.

The term “personal communication device” does not include an electronic device provided to a student by Life School.

Tex. Educ. Code § 37.082(d).

“School property” means anywhere on a Life School campus or in a Life School facility where instruction is provided, including but not limited to: classrooms, hallways, gyms, cafeterias, band halls, and all other extracurricular spaces; outdoor fields, tracks, and other athletic areas; all breezeways, courtyards, playgrounds, and other outdoor areas, specifically including all school parking lots.

“School day” means the time of day beginning with the first bell of the day and ending with the last bell of the day.

Before- or after-school activities as part of Life School’s extracurricular offerings are not part of the school day.

“Use” is defined as a device in possession of a student that is turned on and capable of receiving or sending a communication signal.

“Possession” means being on the person of the student, directly held, in pockets, in a backpack, or otherwise accessible and under the control of the student directly.

Sec. 2. STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

a) Use Prohibited

Life School prohibits students from using a personal communication device while on school property during the school day for students in grades 7-12. Elementary students in K-6th grade are not permitted to use cell phones at any time on school property.

b) Guidelines for Student Possession of Personal Communication Devices

Students may bring a personal communication device to school; however, all personal communication devices must be powered off, remain unused, and stored in the student's backpack. Students are prohibited from powering on or using their personal communication devices during the school day, and should not have a device in their pockets or in their hands at any time during the school day. Students found carrying a device in their pockets or physically accessing the device, either in the open or by attempting to access it within a backpack, are in violation of the policy.

c) Confiscation and Disciplinary Consequences

Each Life School campus will designate an appropriate secure location in the school where confiscated student personal communication devices will be kept, and a process to ensure the school can identify which student is the owner of each device that is confiscated.

All Life School administrators and campus staff are authorized to confiscate a personal communication device used in violation of this policy. If a staff member confiscates a device, the staff member should bring the device to the designated storage location when convenient during the day, and the staff member remains responsible for the device until then.

Disciplinary consequences for students who use a personal communication device while on school property during the school day will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including any progressive sanctions for ongoing violations.

Life School may dispose of a confiscated personal communication device in any reasonable manner after having provided the student's parent 90 days' prior notice in writing of Life School's intent to dispose of the device.

Tex. Educ. Code § 37.082.

d) Exception for Certain Authorized Uses

Life School authorizes the use of a personal communication device:

- 1) Necessary to implement an individualized education program or a plan created under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or a similar program or plan.
- 2) By a student with a documented need based on a directive from a qualified physician. The directive must be provided to the campus principal. A qualified physician shall mean a physician licensed to practice in Texas. The directive must state the conditions under which the student would need access to and use of the personal communication device during the school day on school property. The parent may be asked to sign consent for school staff to contact the physician should the school require additional information to comply with the directive. Use authorized under this provision will be conducted in a manner that minimizes disruption to instruction and the school environment, and may be subject to reasonable limitation on time, place, and manner as determined by the campus principal or designee. Authorization under this section can be revoked if the device is being used in a way that is found to disrupt the learning environment.
- 3) Necessary to comply with a health or safety requirement imposed by law or as part of Life School's safety protocols. If the Superintendent determines that a legally required health or safety requirement would authorize or require the use of a personal communication device, the Superintendent shall notify all appropriate staff of the circumstances in which this would be authorized or required. The Board must vote to approve any use under this exception.

Campus principals are authorized to use discretion in permitting student use of personal communication devices in emergency circumstances. Any use permitted under this exception must be reported to the Board during the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Tex. Educ. Code § 37.082(c).

A student who is provided an exception in accordance with the above remains subject to disciplinary measures if the student uses a personal communication device outside the scope of the documented authorized use.

Sec. 3. NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEVICES

If a personal communication device is in the possession of Life School, the school will take appropriate efforts to keep the device stored and free from damage. However, Life School ***is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen personal communication devices***. Neither parents nor students will be compensated for devices that have been in Life School's possession in the event those devices are lost or damaged while in possession of the school.