



**CHITTENANGO CENTRAL SCHOOLS**  
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August 21, 2025

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Dear Chittenango Central School District Parents and Guardians,

We write to inform you about an important change that will affect all students in our District beginning September 2, 2025. New York State has enacted legislation requiring all schools to implement a "bell-to-bell" restriction on personal internet devices during the instructional day. This letter outlines how the District will comply with this law while ensuring a positive learning environment for all students. Please review this information carefully and discuss it with your child before the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

In simple terms, the law mandates that personal cell phones and internet-enabled devices must be "off and away, during the day." This applies to the entire school day from the first bell to dismissal, covering all school grounds and activities. While school buses in transit are not included in this restriction, all other school-related activities during instructional hours are covered.

In accordance with this new state law, our Board of Education has adopted a comprehensive policy that establishes a district-wide ban on student use of internet-enabled devices during the school day. This policy applies to **all** personal electronic devices, including:

- **Smartphones** – All cell phones regardless of make or model
- **Tablets & Laptops** – Personal tablets, iPads and laptop computers
- **Smartwatches** – Watches with internet connectivity or messaging capabilities
- **Audio Devices** – Headphones, speakers, and other audio equipment

It's important to note that school-issued devices such as laptops, tablets, or iPads that are specifically deployed for instructional purposes are exempt from this policy. These devices will continue to be used as educational tools under teacher supervision.

### **Elementary Students (UPK – Grade 4)**

There is no change to our current elementary school policy. Personal cell phones and internet-enabled devices are discouraged and should not be brought to school. If circumstances require your elementary student to have a device, please contact your school principal to make appropriate arrangements.

### **Secondary Students (Grades 5-12)**

To comply with the law while allowing students to bring devices to school for before/after school use, the district will provide:

- A school-issued non-locking Velcro pouch for each student
- Access to a secure school locker

Students may choose to keep their pouched device with them or store it in their locker during the day. Each student will receive their own numbered pouch and will be responsible for it throughout the year. The Velcro closure ensures that devices are secured but can be accessed quickly at the end of the day or in case of emergency.

While the law is comprehensive, it does recognize several important exceptions where student use of personal devices may be permitted:

1. **District-provided devices** used for educational purposes
2. **Health & Safety needs**, such as glucose monitors or during emergencies
3. **Translation assistance** for English Language Learners (ELL)
4. **Accommodations** required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan

If you believe your child qualifies for one of these exceptions, please contact your school's administration to discuss appropriate documentation and accommodations.

We understand that the ability to contact your child during the school day is important to many families. While direct phone contact will no longer be possible, we have established alternative communication channels:

- Call the school's main office to relay urgent messages to your child
- Students can use a dedicated phone line in the main office to contact family when needed
- The District will continue to use email and ParentSquare for both individual and mass communications

Other relative information, including non-compliance and/or lost pouches, can be found on the District website.

Thank you, for your continued support and partnership. We look forward to the opening of the 2025 - 2026 school year, on Wednesday, September 3, 2025!

Go Bears!

Your CCSD Administrative Team