



Vertus Charter School Cell Phone and Wireless Device Policy

In alignment with the New York State FY26 Distraction-Free Schools directive, Vertus Charter School maintains a strict policy prohibiting the use of cell phones and other personally owned internet-enabled devices by students during the school day, anywhere on school grounds, except under limited, approved circumstances as outlined below.

Policy Overview

- **Device Collection:**

All students are required to turn in their **cell phones** and **personally-owned internet-enabled** devices to staff during morning check-in in the school foyer.

- Students arriving late must turn in their device to the **main office** upon check-in.
- Devices will be securely stored on-site in designated, locked storage areas.

- **Prohibited Use:**

Students may not possess or use personally-owned internet-enabled devices at any point during the school day unless **explicitly approved** under an authorized exception (see below).

- Any unauthorized use will result in the device being **confiscated** and held for parent or guardian pickup.
- Vertus is **not responsible** for lost or stolen devices that are not turned in during the designated check-in process.

Exceptions to the Policy

Personally-owned internet-enabled devices may be permitted under the following approved exceptions, in accordance with state guidance:

1. **Health Management:** Required for student health needs (e.g., diabetes monitoring) as determined by school health personnel.
2. **Translation Support:** To facilitate communication for English Language Learners, when approved.
3. **Legal Requirements:** When use is mandated by law or as part of a student's **IEP or 504 Plan**.
4. **Caregiving Role:** A school social worker or counselor may authorize use for students who serve as **primary caregivers**.

All exceptions must be documented and approved in writing.

Family Communication

Parents or guardians who need to contact their child during the school day may:

- Call the **main office at 585-474-8911**, or
- Contact the student's **Preceptor directly**.

Families will receive **written notice** of these communication methods annually and upon student enrollment.

Equity and Enforcement

- Vertus will not suspend students **solely for violations** of this policy.
- The school will collect data and publish an **annual enforcement report** starting September 1, 2026.
- Any statistically significant **disparities in enforcement** based on race, ethnicity, disability status, or other demographic factors will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with state equity guidelines.