



## MARJORIE WILLIAMS ACADEMY

129 Allen Circle | Newland, NC 28657  
P: 828.733.5241 F: 828.737.7915

[www.williamsacademy.org](http://www.williamsacademy.org)

### Williams Academy

## Policy on Student Use of Cell Phones and Wireless Communication Devices

### I. Purpose

Williams Academy recognizes that wireless communication devices (WCDs), including cell phones, tablets, laptops, paging devices, two-way radios, and gaming devices, are widely used by students and families. While these devices can support learning and safety, they can also disrupt instruction, testing, and the learning environment if not managed appropriately. This policy establishes clear expectations, enforcement protocols, and communication procedures to ensure responsible use in alignment with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) requirements.

### II. Definitions

Wireless Communication Device (WCD): Any portable wireless device with the capability to provide voice, messaging, or data communication between two or more parties, including but not limited to:

- Cellular telephones
- Tablet computers
- Laptop computers
- Paging devices
- Two-way radios
- Gaming devices

### III. Student Expectations

#### Instructional Time

- WCDs must be powered off or silenced and stored out of sight during instructional time unless expressly authorized by a teacher.
- Unauthorized use during instruction (calls, texts, browsing, gaming, recording, or social media) is prohibited.

#### Testing Environments

- WCDs are strictly prohibited in classrooms during state or local assessments, per NCDPI and testing regulations.
- Devices must be turned off and stored in a designated area before testing begins.
- Unauthorized possession or use of a WCD during testing will result in test invalidation and disciplinary action.

### **Other Restricted Areas**

- WCDs are not permitted during assemblies, school performances, safety drills, or other designated events.
- Devices may not be used in restrooms, locker rooms, or other areas where personal privacy is expected.

### **IV. Exceptions**

Exceptions to this policy will be made under the following conditions:

- Medical necessity (e.g., continuous glucose monitoring devices linked to a phone).
- Accessibility needs documented through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.
- Administrative approval for specific instructional or safety purposes.

### **V. Staff Enforcement Protocols**

#### **Progressive Discipline**

- First Offense: Verbal warning and reminder of policy.
- Second Offense: Confiscation of device until picked up by a parent/guardian; disciplinary referral.
- Third Offense: Administrative action, which may include suspension and loss of device privileges.

#### **Confiscation Procedures**

- Staff will collect the device in a respectful, non-confrontational manner.
- Confiscated devices must be secured in a locked cabinet/desk in the teacher's classroom or delivered to the main office.

### **VI. Safe Storage Procedures**

- During testing, assemblies, or other restricted times, students will be instructed to power off devices and place them in a designated storage area (e.g., collection bins, locked classroom cabinet, or personal locker).
- Teachers and administrators are responsible for monitoring collection and return procedures to ensure security of devices.
- Williams Academy is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to WCDs brought to school.

### **VII. Communication of Policy**

This policy will be published in the Williams Academy Student & Family Handbook and Staff Handbook.

Copies will be provided at student orientation, open house, and parent information nights.

Updates will be communicated through email, school website, newsletters, and other parent communication platforms.

Staff will review enforcement procedures during professional development sessions.

### **VIII. Alignment with NCDPI Guidance**

This policy is consistent with NCDPI rules regarding the prohibition of wireless devices in testing environments and provides clear expectations to ensure a safe and focused learning environment.