

## Norton Public Schools Use of Electronic Devices

Technology plays an ever-increasing part in our daily lives.

### **Uses - Students**

1. Electronic devices including, but not limited to cell phones, ipods, and other similar electronic devices are prohibited during school hours without the special permission of an administrator or authorized staff member. If seen, heard, or used, they will be confiscated and returned only to a parent and/or guardian. Refusal of compliance will result in out of school suspension or appropriate suspension alternative.
2. Sites such as You Tube and My Space allow for recorded clips to be posted for all to see, and though some may be done without any ill will, if they were obtained secretly, they are illegal. Though video is not covered by this law, any audio portion accompanying it would be. These devices can be easily concealed, and some are even incorporated into other common devices such as cell phones.
3. Picture phones in the school zone present a variety of concerns regarding the rights to privacy for all members of our community. The school administration has the discretion to investigate the pictures on a picture phone. The phone may be subject to search if it is believed to have been used in a manner inconsistent with individual rights.
4. Cell phones used as recording devices on school grounds are also prohibited. Strict guidelines exist according to state law consisting of fines and/or incarceration.

### **Illegal Uses/Consequences – Students, Employees, Visitors**

Chapter 272, Section 99C of the Massachusetts General Laws states in part that it is illegal for someone to attempt to or actually record any communication secretly or to procure another to do so. This is a felony, punishable by a state prison term of up to five years and or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00. Some states have laws that allow for “one-party” consent, whereby so long as one party involved in the recording is aware of it and consents to it, others do not have to be aware of it. This is not the case in Massachusetts. Anyone recorded must be aware of it and must consent to it. In addition to the criminal penalties a violator might face, there are also potential civil damages that could be pursued by a victim.

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