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Cell phones and other handheld electronic devices will be allowed for academic use at Coventry's schools after the school committee passed a policy permitting it recently.

## BYOD policy approved in Cov. schools

Student cell phones, etc. can now be powered up and utilized for classes

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COVENTRY — Given the recent “technology frenzy” Coventry School Superintendent Mike Almeida is calling it, with making sure students have Chromebooks and also knowing they bring other devices to school, the school committee passed a policy for the use of personal technology in the district.

“This is long overdue,” Almeida said. “The discussion began last year for us but other school districts began doing it two years ago.”

Almeida explained how for years, students have been asked to “power down,” when they walk into school and begin their day. Now, as long as the device — cell phone, Nook, laptop, Chromebook, iPad, etc. — is being used for educational purposes, then students can have it on.

Because technology has changed the way teachers and administrators approach education as students are prepared for their futures, the school district understands the many positive educational benefits of using technology in the classroom and the importance of the integration of technology in the curriculum.

Students in grades three through 12 have been provided access to a Chromebook but students may benefit from using their own devices at school for educational purposes.

According to the policy, this will be treated like any other school policy with compliance.

Students must adhere to all expectations in their handbooks or district policies as well.

This means that students who use their personal technology at school must abide by the policies already established regarding responsible use of the internet, bullying, cheating, harassment, threats and other misconduct.

The other aspect of compliance is that the technology will only be used at the teachers' discretion.

Students must immediately comply with their teacher's requests to shut it down or put it away.

Almeida said it will take some adjusting because it is a change and now they can do something they've been told not to do but it's also a great thing.

“It's such an exciting time for these kids and our teachers and the use of technology will really make learning authentic for the students at this point because this is how it's being done and what's even better is that the students already use these things so they'll be teaching the teacher a thing or two,” said Almeida. “It's really going to change the way student and teachers interact and learn in so many ways.”