

REGULATION MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: BLB, JGA-RB, JGB-RA
Responsible Office: Deputy Superintendent of School Support and Improvement
Chief Operating Officer

Portable Communication Devices

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for possession and use of portable communication devices by students who are on Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) property or engaged in MCPS-sponsored activities.

II. DEFINITION

- A. A *portable communication device* (PCD) refers to any device carried, worn, or stored by a student to receive or communicate messages. Excluded from this definition is any device with communication capabilities that has been approved for instructional purposes.
- B. *Principal/designee* refers to the administrator responsible for a school or office, as appropriate.
- C. *MCPS property* is defined as any school, bus, or facility, including grounds, owned or occupied by MCPS. The definition includes the location of an MCPS-sponsored activity as well as transportation provided by MCPS to attend an MCPS-sponsored activity.
- D. *Student Day* starts at the time that students arrive and ends when the dismissal bell indicates the end of the instructional day. Student Day also includes the instructional times for students attending extended day and extended year instructional programs.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. Secondary school students may possess PCDs on MCPS property and at MCPS-sponsored activities. High school students may use PCDs during student lunch

periods. Otherwise, the secondary school student may not turn on/use the device until the end of the official student day on the secondary school campus.

1. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the device is turned off and out of sight during times of unauthorized use.
 2. Use of devices by secondary school students riding to and from school on MCPS buses is permitted as long as it does not impact the safe operation of the school bus. However, such students may not use PCDs on MCPS or commercially chartered buses used for school-sponsored activities during the official instructional day.
- B. Elementary school students are not permitted to possess or use PCDs on MCPS school campuses during the student day. By written request from a parent or guardian and upon the approval of the principal/designee, an elementary school student may possess a PCD on an elementary school campus during the student day. Elementary principals/designees will grant waivers to the regulation based on consideration of the following factors: safety to and from school, communication during off-campus after-school activities, or medical concerns. Other factors may be considered at the discretion of the principal/designee.
- C. Secondary school students on the campus of an elementary school must have all PCDs turned off and out of sight during the student day, including student lunch periods. Secondary school students on the campus of an elementary school outside of the student day may use a PCD.
- D. No student may use a PCD on any MCPS property in a manner that is illegal, profane, indecent, obscene, constitutes an invasion of privacy, or violates MCPS regulations regarding academic integrity. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, calls, photographs, or text messages.
- E. Any student who violates this regulation will be subject to disciplinary action.
1. Any staff member or student having knowledge or reasonable suspicion of unauthorized possession or use of a PCD by a student on MCPS property should promptly report this information to the principal/designee.
 2. Procedures in this regulation will be incorporated into the local school discipline plan process. Such discipline could include, but not be limited to, conference, confiscation of the device, loss of privileges, and detention.

3. Appeals of school disciplinary decisions under paragraph D will be administered according to MCPS Board Policy BLB, *Rules of Procedure in Appeals and Hearings*.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY/LIABILITY

MCPS will assume no responsibility or liability for loss, theft, or damage to a device or for the unauthorized use of any such device.

Regulation History: New Regulation, November 6, 1992; revised July 23, 1997; reviewed July 20, 1998; revised May 24, 2000; revised October 16, 2001; revised August 15, 2002; revised July 11, 2003; revised December 22, 2005; revised June 12, 2007; revised October 23, 2012.