

# REGULATION

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

---

**Related Entries:** BLB, JGA-RB, JGB-RA  
**Responsible Office:** Deputy Superintendent of Schools  
Chief Operating Officer

### Portable Communication Devices

#### I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures and penalties 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. Such devices may include, but are not limited to, portable pagers, hand-held radios, and cellular telephones. This definition also will include any new technology developed for similar purposes. 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.

#### III. PROCEDURES

- A. Secondary school students may possess portable communication devices on MCPS property and at MCPS-sponsored activities. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the device is turned off and out of sight during times of unauthorized use. The secondary school student may not turn on/use the device until the end of the official instructional day on the secondary school campus. 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 portable communication devices on MCPS or commercially chartered buses used for school-sponsored activities during the official instructional day.

- B. No student may use a portable communication device 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, photographs or text messages.
- C. Secondary school students on the campus of an elementary school for a legitimate purpose must have all portable communication devices turned off and out of sight during the official instructional day. Secondary school students on the campus of an elementary school outside of the official instructional day for a legitimate purpose may use a portable communication device.
- D. This regulation applies to the instructional times for students attending extended day and extended year instructional programs.
- E. Elementary school students are not permitted to possess or use portable communication devices on MCPS school campuses during the instructional day. By written request from a parent or guardian and upon the approval of the principal/designee, an elementary school student may possess a portable communication device on an elementary school campus during the instructional 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.
- F. Any student who violates this regulation will be subject to disciplinary action.
  - 1. Depending on circumstances, the disciplinary action could include, but not be limited to, conference, confiscation of the device, loss of privileges, detention, and up to 10 days suspension.
  - 2. Suspension of five or more days should be reserved for repeated or extremely serious violations of this regulation.
  - 3. Any staff member or student having knowledge or reasonable suspicion of unauthorized possession or use of a portable communication device by a student on MCPS property should promptly report this information to the principal/designee.

4. If, after appropriate investigation, a student is found in unauthorized possession or use of a portable communication device, the principal/designee may confiscate the device, in accordance with procedures outlined in Regulation JGB-RA, *Search and Seizure*.
5. Procedures in this regulation will be incorporated into the local school discipline plan process.
6. Appeals of school disciplinary decisions under paragraph D will be administered according to MCPS 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.