



## STUDENTS: Conduct

Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices by Students

## I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) recognizes the ever-increasing importance of technology in students' lives and the beneficial role it can play for student education and communication with responsible use. The Board believes, however, that the possession and use of such devices should not interfere with academic instruction, student safety and a positive school climate.

## II. Definitions

- A. *Instructional Day* – The time that the student comes onto school grounds until the time the student leaves school grounds. Instructional day also includes the instructional times for students attending extended day and extended year instructional programs.
- B. *Portable Electronic Communication Device (PECD)* – Any non-Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) issued electronic communication device used to send or receive data via voice, video or text. Examples include, but are not limited to: cell/mobile/Smart phones, Smart watches, tablets, personal computers or other devices equipped with microphones, speakers and/or cameras carried, worn or transported by an individual to receive, communicate or record voice, data, image and/or text content.
- C. *School Administrator* – School principal or in the absence of the principal, the administrator designated by the principal.
- D. *School Property* – Any Board-owned, controlled or leased property or vehicle, regardless of whether students are present.
- E. *School-Sponsored Activity* – An activity that is sponsored, approved, conducted, planned and/or supervised by school staff regardless of whether the activity takes place on or off school property or occurs during regular instructional hours.
- F. *Use* – For the purpose of this policy, use means being in the possession of a portable electronic communication device, which is not powered off or set on silent mode and that is visible to others.

## III. Standards

- A. The use of portable electronic communication devices (PECDs) during instructional time, unless instructional staff has permitted such use for instructional purposes, is prohibited.
- B. The possession or use of PECDs shall not interfere with any aspect of the instructional program. Students shall ensure that the use of the PECD is aligned with the Code of Student Conduct and does not violate any Board policy, Superintendent's rule or school procedure.
- C. Students may possess their PECD on school property and during school-sponsored activities; however, students may not use their PECD until the end of the instructional day with the following exceptions:
  - 1. When instructional staff, in Grade 3 and above, has permitted such use for instructional purposes during instructional time;
  - 2. High school students may use their PECD during student lunch periods; and
  - 3. Middle school students may use their PECD during student lunch periods, as determined by the school administrator of each individual middle school.
- D. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that PECDs are turned off or set on silent mode and out of sight during times when use is prohibited.
- E. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, as further provided in Policy 5550.
- F. The Board is not responsible for the theft, damage, loss, unauthorized use, destruction or data fees of any PECD brought to school by a student.
- G. Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the use of a PECD for assistive technology use identified by a student's Student Support team or Individualized Education Program team.
- H. The Superintendent shall ensure that all students, parents and employees are advised annually of this policy and implementing rule.

IV. Implementation

The Board directs the Superintendent to implement this policy.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article, § 7-305,  
*Suspension and Expulsion Procedures*  
COMAR 13.A.08.01.11, *Disciplinary Actions*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 5500, *Code of Student Conduct*  
Board of Education Policy 5550, *Student Behavior Code*  
Board of Education Policy 5580, *Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment or Intimidation*  
Board of Education Policy 5600, *Students' Responsibilities and Rights*  
Board of Education Policy 6202, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*

Policy  
Adopted: 06/09/20

Board of Education of Baltimore County