

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

5132
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

STUDENTS

Portable Electronic Devices in the Schools

I. Purpose

The Prince George's County Board of Education believes that encouraging the use of technology in schools is essential in our global marketplace and will enhance the educational environment by promoting innovation; increasing student interest in learning; improving student achievement; and empowering teachers to use diverse and effective methods to prepare students for college and career. The Board of Education's policy on portable electronic devices (PEDs) is designed to ensure that the use of PEDs is encouraged during the school day for instructional purposes, and at other times as approved by school administrators, provided that PED use does not violate the Code of Student Conduct in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

II. Policy

The Board of Education adopts this district-wide policy to recognize the value of allowing students to use PEDs, encourage school administrators to approve requests to use PEDs for instructional purposes, but also to hold students accountable for inappropriate PED use in accordance with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

A. Definition:

For purposes of this Policy, the term "portable electronic device", or PED, means an electronic device that emits an audible signal, visual signal, vibration, displays a message, or otherwise summons the possessor. This may include, but is not limited to: cell phones, paging devices, electronic emailing devices, radios, tape players, CD players, DVD players, video cameras, iPods, MP3 players, portable video game players, laptop computers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), cameras, iPads, tablets, e-readers and any device that provides a connection to the Internet.

B. Approved Uses of PEDs in Schools:

1. Students are encouraged to use PEDs for instructional purposes, with school administrator approval.
2. Students are permitted to use PEDs while riding to and from school on PGCPs buses, as long as it does not impact the safe operation of the school bus.
3. The school principal or designee may allow additional times for students to use PEDs at school in approved designated areas.

C. Prohibited Uses of PEDs in Schools:

Students are prohibited from using PEDs in the following manner on school property:

1. Using PEDs in locker rooms or bathrooms at any time.
2. Using PEDs while getting on or off the school bus.
3. “Sexting” or the taking and/or transmission of nude or sexually explicit photos or videos in school.
4. The unauthorized or unlawful sharing or electronic posting of images taken or stored on PEDs during school hours and/or on school property.
5. Taking, uploading or sharing photos, recording audio, or capturing video during the school day in a manner that reflects bullying, harassment, intimidation or cyber bullying.
6. Using PEDs in any manner that reflects violations in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

D. At times when PED use is not permitted, PEDs must be turned off or on silent mode and stored in a back-pack, book bag, pocket, purse, locker, vehicle, etc.

E. Administrators, faculty, and staff may request at any time that students turn off and put away PEDs. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and possible confiscation by the school principal. School administrators are required to consult with parents/guardians regarding a student’s misuse of a PED and appropriate responses in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

F. Waiver of Liability:

1. Student owned PEDs: Students assume full responsibility for their PEDs. The school system may not assume liability for theft, loss, damage or unauthorized use of PEDs possessed by students on school property.

2. PGCPS-issued PEDs: Students are responsible for using PGCPS-issued PEDs in a manner that is consistent with the Information Technology Acceptable Use Guidelines in Board Policy 0115 and Administrative Procedure 0700. Students or parents/guardians shall timely report any damage, such as breakage, malfunction or loss, of PGCPS-issued PEDs to the proper school authority, such as school security, the school principal/designee, or a school administrator. If the cause of the reported damage is due to the student's misuse, PGCPS may require payment for the cost of repair or replacement of the PED.

III. Administrative Procedures

The Chief Executive Officer is directed to promulgate procedures to implement the requirements of this policy and to publish the procedures in the normal course of business.

Policy Adopted
6/17/10

Policy Amended
6/26/14