USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Policy Code:DRAFT **4318**

The board recognizes that cellular phones have become an important tool through which people communicate with their children. Therefore, students are permitted to possess cellular phones and other wireless communication devices on school property as long as such the devices are ~~not activated, used, displayed or visible during the instructional day or as otherwise directed by local school rules or school personnel~~ secured during instructional time as outlined in Section A of this policy. Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, electronic devices with internet capability, paging devices, two-way radios, IPAD, IPOD and other similar devices.

A. ~~AUTHORIZED USE~~ GENERAL GUIDELINES

Elementary schools students are not allowed to possess a wireless communication device at school during the instructional day unless in the opinion of the principal a special circumstance exists that warrants approval. The principal will make this decision on a case by case basis and will provide instructions to the student on how the device is to be secured. The device should not be visible or in use at any time during the instructional day.

Middle and high school students may possess a wireless communication device as long as it is secured during instructional time. The device may only be visible and/or used during non-instructional periods at the discretion of the principal. An example of a non-instructional includes lunch periods (in designated areas such as the cafeteria and eating spaces) and before and after the instructional day. The device should not be visible and should remain secured during class changes during the instructional day. At the discretion of the principal, wireless devices may be used in distance learning classes and/or any class that the teacher is not physically located at the school site and/or as necessary for proper communication between student and teacher.

~~Administrators may authorize individual students to use wireless communication devices for personal purposes when there is a reasonable need for such communication. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes provided that they supervise the students during such use.~~

~~Though general use is permitted during non-instructional hours, use of cellular phones and other wireless communication devices may be prohibited on school buses when noise from such devices interferes with the safe operation of the buses. In addition, elementary and middle school students who participate in after-school programs are prohibited from using wireless communication devices for the duration of such programming~~.

B. CONSEQUENCES FOR UNAUTHORIZED USE

School employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication device that is on, used, displayed or visible in violation of this policy. Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, confiscated wireless communication devices will be returned only to the student's parent or guardian.

Violations of this policy will result in consequences as provided in the school's student behavior management plan (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior). Aggravating factors may subject a student to more stringent disciplinary consequences, up to and including expulsion.

Examples of such aggravating factors include, but are not limited to, using wireless communication devices: (1) to reproduce images of tests, to access unauthorized school information or to assist students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates any school board policy, administrative regulation or school rule; and (2) ~~to take illicit~~ photographs for photography or videography of any kind, regardless of intent.

C. LIABILITY

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their wireless communication devices. The school system is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of a cellular phone or any other personal wireless communication device.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -391

Cross References: Student Behavior Policies (policy 4300), ~~School Plan for Management of Student Behavior (policy 4302),~~ Disruptive Behavior (policy 4315), Student Searches (policy 4342)

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