

# **Policy JICJ Student Possession/Use of Wireless Electronic Devices**

*Issued 12/21*

The board recognizes that, depending on how they are used, wireless electronic devices, as defined herein, can be either valuable learning tools or a source of disruption in the learning environment. In order to maintain a secure and orderly learning environment, student use and possession of wireless electronic devices shall be subject to the limitations and regulations as set forth in this policy.

“Wireless electronic device” means a handheld electronic device having the ability to receive and/or transmit voice, text, or data messages without a cable connection and may include, but is not limited to, mobile cellular telephones, smart phones, smart watches, tablets, pagers, and computer (unless school/district issued) and communications devices currently in existence. This also includes any current or emerging wireless technologies or portable information technology systems developed for similar purposes.

This policy applies to all district property, school grounds, school buildings, personal vehicles on school property, buses, district owned vehicles during the instructional day.

The “instructional school day” is defined as the time from the arrival bell until the final dismissal bell. The instructional school day includes, but is not limited to, study halls, lunch break, class changes, and any other structured or unstructured activities.

## **Student Possession and Use**

Students may possess wireless electronic devices as described as long as the students adhere to the regulations set forth herein. Any unauthorized use, activation, and/or visibility of wireless electronic devices during the instructional school day is prohibited as it can disrupt the instructional program and/or distract from the educational environment.

Students will not use wireless electronic devices to capture video, audio, or photos of other people at school. The posting of those photographs, audio, and/or video will result in disciplinary consequences.

Earbuds and/or headphones may only be worn in the classroom for instructional purposes with permission of the teacher. Earbuds and/or headphones shall not be worn at any other time during the instructional school day.

Activated (i.e. turned “on”) wireless electronic devices are permitted on all district owned and state owned buses as long as their use and/or activation does not disrupt the safe operation of the buses, the safety of students boarding/disembarking buses, violate student/staff privacy rights, or violate any other district policies. The bus driver may confiscate any wireless electronic device deemed to be causing a disruption.

Students may possess wireless electronic devices as described provided such devices are not visible, used (unless authorized by this policy), or activated (i.e. turned “on”) and are kept in the “off” position throughout the instructional school day. Students shall keep such devices stored in a locker, backpack, or other non-visible secure location during the instructional school day.

Times of authorized use are limited to the following:

- before the beginning of the instructional school day
- after the dismissal bell at the end of the instructional school day

### **Consequences of Violation**

A student who violates this policy as to visibility, use alone, not accompanied by other misconduct, and/or activation of the wireless electronic device is subject to the following disciplinary/consequences:

**First Offense** – Device Confiscated, student warning; parent/legal guardian conference with administrator; device returned at conference.

**Second Offense** – Device Confiscated, one day out-of-school suspension; parent/legal guardian conference with administrator; device returned at conference; student is prohibited from possessing any wireless electronic device at school or on school property for the remainder of the school year.

**Third Offense** – Device Confiscated, three days out-of-school suspension; parent/guardian conference; device returned at conference; and student is prohibited from possessing wireless electronic device at school or on school property for one calendar year.

**Fourth Offense** – Discipline as determined by the district up to expulsion for the remainder of the school year.

In addition, students will be disciplined for their use of a device during certain misconduct as set forth below. Conduct infractions will follow the guidelines set forth in Student Code of Conduct. A student’s possession, display, or use of a wireless electronic device as described above on school property contrary to the provisions of this policy shall be viewed as the unauthorized use of such device subjecting the student to disciplinary consequences when such possession, display, or use of the device in conjunction with misconduct that includes, but is not limited to:

- use that violates academic integrity, such as the reproduction of images of instructional materials or the communication of text or examination contents or answers, to provide access to unauthorized school information, or to provide assistance to students in any aspect of their instructional program

in a manner that violates school board policy or the Student Code of Conduct;

- the communication of the marks or grades assigned to students resulting from testing or evaluation or the actual contents, or parts thereof, of any test or evaluation or the actual contents, or parts thereof, of any test or evaluation activity being completed by an individual(s);
- use to commit a crime under federal or state law;
- violation of a student's or other person's reasonable expectation of privacy by using such device with image and/or sound recording capabilities in student locker rooms, restrooms, or any other student changing areas, or in the classroom, whether such use occurs during the instructional school day or any other time on school property;
- use of such devices as described above to take photographs or make video/audio recordings while on school property, while on school-sponsored transportation, or while a student is engaged in school-sponsored activities, except for classroom purposes as directed by the teacher;
- use in a manner that is profane, indecent, obscene, threatening, discriminatory, bullying, or harassing through language, pictures, or gestures;
- use of the device in the course of committing any act(s) which constitute a violation of district policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct; or
- Failure to turn over a wireless electronic device immediately when requested by a staff member.

### **Acceptable Uses**

Use of wireless electronic devices as described are permissible in the following circumstances:

*IEP, 504, or healthcare/medical plan*

Students may use such devices as described during class time when authorized pursuant to an individualized education program (IEP), a Section 504 accommodation plan, or a healthcare/medical plan with supportive documentation from the student's physician.

*Health, safety, or emergency reasons*

Principals may make exceptions to the restrictions in this policy, in part or in its entirety, for health, safety, or emergency reasons, provided as soon as possible the principal submits a written report of the exception and reasons to the superintendent.

#### *School trips or school-sponsored activities*

The use, display, or activation of wireless electronic devices as described during school trips or school sponsored activities may be permitted at the discretion of the principal or designee, but shall not be disruptive to the activity.

#### *Volunteer Service Organizations*

A student who is 18 years or older and wishes to participate as a member of a volunteer firefighter or emergency services organization may be authorized to carry a wireless electronic device with special permission from the school principal upon filing a written request from the volunteer organization.

### **Responsibility/Liability**

Any student who chooses to bring to school a wireless electronic device as described shall do so at the student's own risk and shall be personally responsible for the security of the device. Neither the school personnel nor the district will assume any responsibility or liability for loss, theft, damage, or vandalism to such devices as described above brought onto school property or the unauthorized use of any such device.

Adopted 7/15/08; Revised 3/19/13, 10/18/16, 7/30/19, \_\_\_\_\_

#### Legal References:

S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:

Section 59-63-280 – Requires board to adopt a policy on student use of electronic devices.

Colleton County School District