

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Use of electronic communication devices, such as a pager (beeper), portable telephone, or any wireless communication device (which are not part of the educational program) during regular instructional hours is prohibited. Regular instructional hours are defined as beginning at the opening bell and concluding at the dismissal bell. Students involved in before-school, after-school, and weekend instructional activities shall not use electronic communication devices within the assigned areas of the activity from the beginning of the scheduled activity until its conclusion. The electronic communication device must be turned off and stored in the student's locker, book bag, automobile, or purse during school hours and while being transported on the bus. The ban on the use of electronic devices applies to buses used for all school-related activities.

Use of electronic communication devices during the regular instructional hours is a Category I offense for which a student may be suspended. If suspension is determined to be the appropriate course of action, the principal or principal's designee should promptly notify the parent/guardian of the student's suspension from school.

After a thorough investigation, if the principal or his/her designee believes that the electronic communication device has been involved in a criminal activity, including the distribution of drugs, the principal should contact a school resource officer (SRO) or the Baltimore County Police Department by calling 9-911 to report the matter. The police should be asked to report to the principal's office or the principal's designee's office as soon as possible. The electronic communication device and a completed Police Information Report (PS 119, BEBCO 84-189-90) should be given to the police. Only if both the principal or principal's designee and the police believe that criminal activity may have occurred will the police be allowed to interview the student in school. The student's parent/guardian must be called and informed that the police will be allowed to interview the student immediately in school. The parent/guardian must be notified by telephone prior to the police interviewing the student. If it is not possible to contact the parent/guardian, attempts that were made to contact the parent/guardian should be documented and the interview shall be conducted in the presence of the principal or the principal's designee.

Distribution and/or sale of a controlled dangerous substance (illegal drugs) are a Category III Offense that shall result in expulsion. If suspension to the superintendent's designee with the recommendation for expulsion is determined to be the appropriate course of action to take with the student, the principal or principal's designee should promptly notify the parent/guardian of the student's suspension and of the fact that the police are involved in the investigation. A completed copy of the Police Property Inventory Form should be included in the suspension packet that will be forwarded to the

superintendent's designee prior to the hearing date. The principal or principal's designee must make sure that the student's due process rights are not violated.

If the student is under age 18 and it is believed that the electronic communication device may be connected to criminal activity, a police report should be completed and a copy should be given to the principal or principal's designee. The police will process the police report according to police guidelines. If the student is age 18 or older, the principal or the principal's designee should appear before a District Court Commissioner to request that a summons or arrest warrant be issued. When appearing, the principal or principal's designee should have available a copy of the police report regarding the offense.

Legal References: Article 26, Sec. 104, *Annotated Code of Maryland*

Revised 1993
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