

<u>Section J:</u>  <b>Students</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education</b>		
	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
	<b>Use of Wireless Communication Devices in School</b>	<b>J-240</b>	<b>10/96</b>
		Reviewed: <b>6/25</b>	Revised: <b>7/25</b>

## PURPOSE

Wireless communication devices have many applications, some of which may be appropriate for student use during the school day. This policy outlines the permissible and appropriate use of such devices during school hours.

## DEFINITIONS

A “wireless communication device” (WCD) is a personal portable wireless device that has the capacity to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties.<sup>1</sup> WCDs include, but are not limited to cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, and tablets.

A “district-issued device” refers to an electronic device, such as a laptop or tablet, purchased for student educational use during and outside of instructional time.

For the purposes of this policy, “instructional time” refers to scheduled in-class time in which students are expected to be learning during the school day. “Non-instructional time” refers to scheduled out-of-class time during the school day, such as breakfast and lunch or transition time between classes. The “school day,” for the purposes of this policy, is further defined as on-campus time between the designated start and end of the school day, as defined in Policy A-140.

## USE OF DISTRICT-ISSUED DEVICES

Knox County Schools is a 1:1 district, meaning every student is equipped with a district-issued device to assist with learning in and outside of the classroom. Use of district-issued devices are therefore exempt from the parameters outlined within this policy and may be used at the discretion of the school to facilitate learning.

## USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

WCDs may be stored in backpacks, purses, or personal carry-alls. However, the use of the devices during the school day is prohibited for all students except in the following circumstances:<sup>1</sup>

1. The principal authorizes a teacher to approve the use of WCDs for educational purposes during instructional time;
2. A student uses a WCD in the event of an emergency or to manage the student’s health;
3. A student’s use of a WCD during instructional time is included in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 plan, or Individual Learning Plan (ILP); or
4. A student with a disability uses a WCD to operate assistive technology to increase, maintain, or improve the student’s functional capabilities.

These restrictions are not intended to discourage the use of these devices for instructional purposes, but to establish parameters and appropriate oversight for their use. Improper use or storage of WCDs may result in confiscation of the device until it can be released directly to a student's parents and/or legal guardians. A student in violation of this policy is subject to related disciplinary action as defined in Policy J-191.

Knox County Schools is not liable for loss or damage to any wireless communication devices brought onto school campuses. Although Knox County Schools will take reasonable steps to protect a student's WCD should it be confiscated, KCS does not expressly or implicitly assume, and does not assume, any responsibility for loss of or damage to any WCD.

## **LOSS OF DEVICE PRIVILEGES**

Any device used outside these parameters may result in confiscation until it can be released directly to the student's parent or legal guardian. A teacher may withhold a WCD from a student during a class if the device is a distraction to the class or student.<sup>2</sup> A student who possesses a WCD in violation of this policy is subject to related disciplinary action, as defined in Policy J-191. Continued violation of this policy may also result in loss of WCD privileges. Additionally, students may lose WCD privileges for any policy violation that is related to or is the result of the use of a WCD.

## **PROHIBITED USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

In addition to the parameters established above, use of a WCD to bully, harass, or intimidate others will be subject to related disciplinary action, as defined in Policy J-191. Using a WCD for any illicit activity including but not limited to take, disseminate, transfer, or share obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images, photographs, or similar material whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise may constitute a crime under State and/or Federal law. Any student taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, illegal, or otherwise inappropriate images or photographs of other students or any other individual, particularly underage, at school, on a school bus or while attending any school event or activity will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school district and reported to law enforcement and other appropriate State or Federal agencies.<sup>3</sup>

## **COMMUNICATION IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR POSSIBLE EMERGENCY**

Students will be authorized to use WCDs for communication purposes in the event of an emergency or possible emergency. However, the principal or principal's designee will remain the primary point of contact for families in the event of an emergency or possible emergency. All emergency communication from the school or district will be shared through the district's mass communication system.

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### **Legal References:**

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-(cite pending).
2. T.C.A. § 49-6-4002.
3. T.C.A. § 37-1-403.