

Section J:

# Knox County Board of Education

**Students**

Descriptor Term:

**Use of Personal Communication  
Devices in School**

Descriptor Code:

**J-240**

Issued:

**10/96**

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**6/22**

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**7/22**

## **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND/OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

A "personal communication device" (PCD) such as a cell phone, is a device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor.

A personal electronic device is a device that can be used as a camera, a recorder, a player, or any such item that electronically transmits or receives a signal, image, sound file, data file or message.

PCDs and personal electronic devices including but not limited to CD players, iPods, MP3 players, netbooks, laptop or notebook computers or iPads may be stored in backpacks, purses, or personal carry-alls. However, the use of the devices during class-time is forbidden unless approved for an academic activity by the principal or the principal's designee. This is 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 PCDs and electronic devices may result in confiscation of the device until it can be released directly to a student's parents and/or guardians. A student in violation of this policy is subject to related disciplinary action.

### **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

#### **Use by students in grades Pre-K-5**

Students may possess PCDs while on school property. However, the PCD must be in the off mode and must be kept in a backpack, purse or similar personal carry-all and may not be used unless the principal or the principal's designee grants a student permission to do so. The principal or the principal's designee may specifically grant permission for a student to use a PCD during class time for a specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

#### **Use by Students in Grades 6-8**

Students may possess PCDs while on school property. The devices may be used before and after school. At all other times the PCD must be in the off mode. The principal or the principal's designee may grant a student permission to use a PCD during class time for a specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

#### **Use by Students in Grades 9-12**

Students may possess PCDs while on school property. The devices may be used before and after school, during lunch periods and during class change times. At all other times the PCD must be in the silent mode. The principal or the principal's designee may grant a student permission to use a PCD during class time for a specific academic purpose or at other times for other purposes that the principal deems appropriate.

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**VIOLATION OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

A PCD used outside these parameters may result in confiscation of the PCD until it can be released directly to the student's parent or guardian. A teacher may withhold a PCD from a student during a class if the PCD is a distraction to the class or student.<sup>2</sup> A student who possesses a PCD, in violation of this policy, is subject to related disciplinary action. Continued violation of this policy may result in loss of PCD privileges. Additionally, students may lose PCD privileges for any policy violation that is related to or is the result of the use of a PCD whether or not the PCD was used within the parameters of this policy.

**INAPPROPRIATE USE OF PCD AND/OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

In addition to the parameters established above, use of a PCD or other electronic device to bully, harass or intimidate others will be subject to related disciplinary action. Using a PCD or other electronic device 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.

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Legal References:

- 1. T.C.A. § 49-6-4214.
- 2. T.C.A. § 49-6-4002.

Approved as to Legal Form  
By Knox County Law Director 6/22/2022  
*/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director*