



St. Mary's County
Public Schools

ONE COMMUNITY COMMITTED
TO THE LEARNING AND SAFETY
OF ALL CHILDREN

Realizing the Vision

September 2010

Student Possession or Use of Portable Electronic Devices (Cell Phones)

Information for SMCPS Students, Parents, and Guardians

St. Mary's County Public Schools, like other school districts across the nation, continue to address almost daily concerns with student use of cellular telephones and other electronic devices on school grounds and buses. Many school districts have dealt with the significant levels of disruption to the learning environment and many instances of inappropriate and often illegal behaviors of students using electronic devices in schools. Some of these occurrences have led to tragedy and drawn national media attention as they relate to threats, cyber-bullying, sexting, and other criminal activities. The disruption caused by the students who do not understand there is a proper time and use for such devices has become almost a daily struggle for students and staff. **Beginning in school year 2010-2011, revised policies and regulations have been implemented in St. Mary's County Public Schools to clarify expectations for student possession and use of electronic devices on school grounds.** School personnel have the right to limit the use of electronic communication devices that impede the instructional climate in the school, create a disturbance, or disrupt the school environment.

Students may possess wireless communication devices. **The devices must be kept out of sight and turned off from the beginning of the instructional day (the start of the first class) to the end of the instructional day (the end of the last class).** The devices may not be used or allowed to emit any ringtone or other noise on school grounds or when students are participants in school-sponsored programs or activities to include but not limited to athletics, fine arts, and school clubs. In an exceptional circumstance, a staff member may authorize the use of a cell phone for an appropriate reason. **Students may use wireless communication devices in circumstances if they have first received direct and expressed permission from authorized school personnel to include classroom teachers and bus drivers.** Use of these devices during field trips and other school-sponsored activities off school grounds is subject to the same conditions at the discretion of the supervising staff member. The following categories of students may possess wireless communication devices or handheld portable phones turned on (inaudible signal only) during normal school hours:

- Students using portable pagers for medical reasons
- Students with disabilities may use electronic communication devices in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

MICHAEL J. MARTIRANO, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

ST. MARY'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
23160 MOAKLEY STREET • LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650

Student Possession or Use of Portable Electronic Devices (Cell Phones) Student Discipline

Discipline:

Any observed or reported improper use of an electronic device, contrary to regulation, shall result in confiscation of the electronic device by the site administrator or designee. The parents/legal guardians will be notified and a referral for disciplinary action will occur.

First Offense:

Minimum - Confiscation of device, notification of parent, release to student at the end of the day.

Maximum - 1 day in-school intervention or Saturday School.

Second Offense:

Minimum - Confiscation of device, notification of parent, release to parent at the end of the day, and 1 day in-school intervention or Saturday School.

Maximum - 3 days of in-school intervention or Saturday School.

Third Offense:

Minimum - Confiscation of device, notification of parent, release to parent at the end of the day and 3 days in-school intervention.

Maximum - 3 days suspension.

Please refer to the St. Mary's County Public Schools 2010-2011 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct Section 8, pages 42 and 43.

Additional details pertaining to the policy and regulation may be found under the Board of Education link. Please refer to policy and regulation JFDF and JFDF-R.

Bullying Prevention and Community Awareness

Bullying Prevention for Parents, Guardians, and Community Members

Presentation to be held

September 9, 2010, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
in the Leonardtown High School Auditorium,
23995 Point Lookout Road, Leonardtown, MD

For more information please contact:

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Director, Department of Safety and Security

(301) 475-4256, extension 150

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