

# POLICY

## Queen Anne’s County Public Schools

POLICY TITLE: <b>Queen Anne’s County Public Schools Cell Phone Policy</b>
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>January 4, 2017</b>
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: <b>Students</b> Amendment:

### I. Policy

#### A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the student use of cell/smart phones on the grounds, buildings, and buses of Queen Anne’s County Public Schools.

#### B. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Queen Anne’s County recognizes that cell/smart phones are an integral part of our everyday world and through instant communication may add to the well being of students.

#### C. Rationale

While in general, The Queen Anne’s County Board of Education acknowledges that cell/smart phones are valuable communication devices the Board also recognizes the possibility that these devices may distract or disrupt an educational environment. Therefore limited use of student cell/smart phones will be permitted but must strictly follow the prescribed guidelines

#### D. Definition

**Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy** is the overriding policy that governs and establishes guidelines for the use of all technology equipment, software, related materials, electronic communications and licensed network systems.

**Cell/Smart phone** is a mobile wireless electronic device used to make telephone calls across a wide geographic area, served by many public cells. A smart phone varies from a cell phone because it usually includes functions similar to those found on a personal computer.

**Guidelines** are those procedures designed to ensure that portable communication devices do not disrupt the learning environment.

**Public School Property** refers to any Queen Anne’s County Public School grounds, building, and buses.

**Regular Instructional Hours** are defined as the beginning of the opening bell of the school day and concludes at the dismissal bell at the end of the school day.

**E. Implementation**

The Superintendent is responsible for drafting procedural guidelines for the implementation of this policy.

**F. Evaluation**

The Superintendent will provide the Board of Education a review of this policy in August 2018. The focus of this review will be the effectiveness of this policy in assisting the Board in fulfilling its mission.

## **II. Procedure**

### **A. Use of Cell/Smart Phones in Queen Anne's County Public Schools**

1. As set forth in the Board of Education of Queen Anne's County (QACBOE) Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy (AUP) under no circumstances are students or employees permitted to use cell/smart phones on Queen Anne's County Public School property or during school sponsored activities or events in order to transmit any text or images that are obscene, pornographic, illegal, profane, violate academic policies, or invade another's privacy. This includes "sexting" (the sharing of explicit or otherwise sexually provocative photos). This also includes the possession of inappropriate digital content.

2. Additionally, as set forth in the QACBOE Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy QACPS will not assume any responsibility or liability for loss, theft, damage or destruction of any personal (both student and employee) cell/smart phone.

3. Guidelines for use of a student cell smart/phone according to grade level are as follows:

**Elementary Schools** – Elementary school students are not permitted to possess or use cell/Smart phones while on Queen Anne's County Public School property or while attending any elementary school activity. School office phones are available for those students who need to contact parents.

**Middle and High Schools** – Middle and High school students may possess cell/smart phones during the school day in accordance with the following regulations:

a. Written authorization from the parent/legal custodian or eligible student (18 years and older) to a school administrator indicating that the student is in possession of the cell/Smart phone. Each letter will be kept on file during each school year (includes summer). A student may not have the portable communication device in his/her possession without this written authorization and administrative approval.

b. Prior to entering the school building, the cell/smart phone must be turned off.

c. During regular instructional hours cell/smart phones must be turned off, secured, and out of sight, unless a classroom teacher has given a student authorization to use the device for an educational activity. Once the activity is completed the cell/smart phone must be turned off, secured, and removed from sight.

d. High school students may be granted permission by the principal to use a cell phone during their lunch period and or during transitions between classes.

4. All students who have cell/smart phone use as part of their IEP or 504 plan are authorized to carry such a device during the regular school day.

5. During regular bus transportation to and from school middle and high school students may only use cell/smart phones with permission of the bus driver.

### **B. Use of Student Cell/Smart Phones at School Sponsored or Related Activities**

1. Middle or high school students involved in after-school and weekend instructional activities including Saturday school may not use cell/smart phones without the instructor's permission in the area of the activity from the beginning of the activity until the end of the activity.

2. Cell/smart phones may be used if students are participating in non-academic activities (athletics, drama, clubs, etc).

3. If traveling to or from a school sponsored activity via bus, student cell/smart phones may be used with the permission of the sponsor.

4. During bus transportation to and from athletic events or other school sponsored events, students may use cell/smart phones only with the permission of the athletic coach or principal designee.

### **C. Middle and High School Student Misuse of Cell/Smart Phones**

1. Any staff member having knowledge of unauthorized possession or use of a cell/smart phone by a student on Queen Anne's County Public School property shall promptly report this information to the Principal/designee.

2. Students who misuse cell/smart phones in any of the following ways may face disciplinary action:

Refusal to Turn Off a cell/smart phone. Students in possession of a cell/phone must turn it off when directed by a teacher, administrator, coach, counselor, or other school personnel, and secure it out of sight..

Causing disruption

Using a cell/phone to cheat, including getting and giving answers to tests and copying from the Internet.

Using a cell/smart phone to bully, threaten, harass, or attack another student or school personnel whether or not communicated directly to that person

Sending (or asking to receive) pictures or videos of people without their permission

### **D. Consequences for Inappropriate Use**

When cell/smart phones are misused, students will be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to, verbal or written warning and loss of the cell/smart phone. Additional

consequences are referenced within the Queen Anne's County Public School's Search and Seizure Policy, Mobile Learning Devices Policy, Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy, and the Discipline Policy. Any student in violation of the policy and procedures regarding cell/smart phones may be subject to the following disciplinary actions.

The first offense – confiscation of cell/smart phone for one (1) day and parent must pick up the communication device, with a conference.

The second offense – confiscation of the communication device, and student must attend Saturday School or after school detention. The cell/smart phone will be returned only to the parent at the completion of the consequence and with a conference.

The third offense – One day out-of-school suspension and loss of privileges to have a cell/smart phone for the remainder of the day. The communication device will be confiscated and returned only to parents at the end of the suspension and with a conference.

The fourth offense will result in a three day suspension. The student will not be allowed to have a cell/smart phone on school property for the remainder of the year.

Any subsequent violation may result in additional disciplinary action or loss of school privileges (e.g. parking permit, admission to school functions).

This policy is to be reviewed with the students at the beginning each school year. This policy will be revisited by the Board for evaluation and revision annually.