

**POSSESSION OF PORTABLE COMMUNICATION DEVICES ON TALBOT COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROPERTY**

I. Board Philosophy

The Talbot County Board of Education acknowledges that portable communication devices enhance learning and add to the well being of students, however the Board also recognizes the possibility that these devices may distract or disrupt the education environment. Therefore limited use of portable communication devices will be permitted but must strictly follow the prescribed guidelines.

A. Definition:

1. A portable communication device means any device carried, worn or transported by an individual to receive or communicate messages. Such devices may include but are not limited to portable pagers, hand held radios, cellular telephones, and any personal communication device which has the capability to take photographs of any kind and/or provides for a wireless, unfiltered connection to the internet. This definition will also include any new technology developed for similar purposes.
2. Public school property means any Talbot County Public School grounds, building, and buses.
3. Guidelines are those procedures designed to ensure that portable communication devices do not disrupt the learning environment.
4. Regular instructional hours are defined as the beginning of the opening bell of the school day and concluding at the dismissal bell at the end of the school day. They also include after-school and weekend instructional activities as well as Saturday School.

B. Exemptions with the permission of the principal:

1. Students with disabilities using activated portable communication devices for medical reasons as designated by a physician.
2. Members of any volunteer fire department, ambulance company or rescue squad, who are designated to possess an activated portable communication device on public school property by the chief of the volunteer fire department, ambulance company or rescue squad.

C. Responsibility/Liability:

1. Talbot County Public Schools will assume no responsibility or liability for loss, theft, damage or destruction of any portable communication devices.

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