

STUDENT USAGE OF CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC DEVICES, GAMES AND TOYS

This policy is intended to ensure that a student's personal electronic devices on school property do not interfere with the learning, safety, and well-being of students and staff.

Effective at the start of the 2023 – 2024 school year, students will be allowed to possess cell phones and other personal electronic devices on school buses and at school during the school day according to the specific guidelines and consequences for violating the guidelines developed by the individual schools and posted in the Parent/Student Handbook of each school.

If a student has written authorization from a physician to wear a medical alert device, the student may wear the device and not be in violation of this policy, but the student must present the written authorization from the physician to the principal or his designee at the beginning of the first day the device is worn to school and it must be included in the student's health plan.

If there is a medical reason for a student to possess a cell phone, that may be allowed only pursuant to a section 504 plan or a health plan with prior approval of the principal.

Violation of this policy will result in the confiscation of the device by school authorities and shall be grounds for disciplinary action according to the individual school's hierarchy of consequences for violations of the Student Usage of Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, Games and Toys Policy.

Neither the Morehouse Parish School Board nor its employees will be responsible for loss of or damage to a confiscated electronic device.

Neither the principal or his/her designee shall impose on a student any disciplinary action when any electronic communications device is stored in a motor vehicle and there is no evidence of the student's intent to use or operate the device contrary to the provisions of this policy. Neither the Morehouse Parish School Board, the school or any employee or representative of the Morehouse Parish School Board will be responsible for the loss or damage of any electronic device that may be stolen, damaged, destroyed or confiscated.

Notwithstanding the provisions hereinabove set forth, this policy shall not affect the conduct of law enforcement activities including the use of electronic detection devices, dogs or other means of conducting searches for weapons, drugs or other contraband in whatever manner is otherwise permitted by law and consistent with local School Board policy.

SCHOOL BUS SUSPENSION

School principals may, upon the recommendation of the bus operator, suspend bus riding privileges. Principals shall notify the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance and the Coordinator of Transportation of all bus suspensions. In all cases of suspension, the parent, the Superintendent of Schools, the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance and the Coordinator of Transportation shall be notified in writing, within a 24 hour period, of the facts concerning each suspension, including reason thereof and terms thereof.

Upon being suspended the student will be given a hearing by the principal or his designee, informing the student as to why he is being suspended and for how long. The student, at that time, must be given an opportunity to explain his version of the facts to the principal or his designee.

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FIGHTING

Fighting is unacceptable for any reason at any Morehouse Parish School. A fight is a physical altercation between two or more students. The physical nature of a fight could include, but is not limited to, hitting, punching, slapping, poking, grabbing, pulling, tripping, kicking and pushing.

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Students and parents will be informed of the policy regarding the consequences for fighting. They will also be informed to report the incidences of bullying and other hostile behaviors, as soon as they occur, to teachers and administrators.

After each incident of fighting, all efforts will be made to determine the underlying cause of the altercation through assistance from school administrators, the parish psychologist, or the school counselor.

Each student participating in the fight will give his/her account of the incident to the school administrator. The school administrator may require the student to write an account of the incident. If a student's participation in the fight is deemed as self-defense, no punishment will be issued to that participant.

Students in all grades who congregate around a fight preventing school staff members from breaking up a fight or who film or post a video of a fight on social media will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Notwithstanding any other provision contained in this policy manual or any other document, commencing with the 2022-2023 school year students in Pre-K through grade 6 who are found fighting will be administered corporal punishment or suspended three days out of school for the first and second fight. Students in grades 5 and 6 accused of a third fight will be suspended pending a Superintendent's (or designee's) hearing. If found guilty at the hearing the student will be assigned thirty days at the alternative school.

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