The Catamount School Policy 4318

USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES *Policy Code:* **4318**

I. Purpose

The Catamount School ("School") prioritizes the socioemotional health and well-being of students, safe, orderly schools, and engaging classroom environments conducive to learning. Accordingly, the School seeks to minimize distraction and disruption for learners and teachers, including those brought about by inappropriate use of wireless communication devices and device accessories.

For the purpose of this Policy, "wireless communication device" means any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties, including but not limited to: cellular telephones, paging devices, two-way radios and similar devices, smartphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, tablet computers, laptop computers, gaming devices, Bluetooth® headphones, earbuds, smart glasses, smartwatches that depend upon a connection to a smartphone or other communication device, and other such internet-accessing devices (whether by cellular, wired, or wireless connection).

This policy does not apply to School or University-issued and managed devices, which are governed by Policy 3225, Technology Responsible Use Policy.

II. Use of Wireless Communication Devices

Students are permitted to possess wireless communication devices (and device accessories) at school, but may not display, use, or make devices visible during instructional time unless one of the following exceptions applies:

1. If authorized by a teacher for educational purposes or for use in the event of an emergency.
2. As required by the student's individualized education program or section 504 (29 U.S.C. § 794) plan.
3. As required to manage a student's health care, in accordance with a documented medical condition.

Smartwatches may be worn and used as watches throughout the school day, but any features require wireless connections to a smartphone must be disabled when use of the wireless communication device is prohibited.

To comply with this Policy, Students must keep wireless communication devices stored in locked storage boxes during the school day.

A. Buses

Although generally permitted before and after school, use of wireless communication devices may

be regulated or prohibited on school buses by Jackson County Public Schools (JCPS) transportation or School staff when such devices interfere with the safe operation of the buses. Audio should be played only with headphones or earbuds and at a reasonable volume so as not to disturb other students or distract the driver. Students should still be able to hear directions from the driver or other staff while using headphones or earbuds.

III. Consequences for Unauthorized Use

School employees may immediately confiscate any wireless communication devices that are on, used, displayed, or visible in violation of this Policy. Generally, confiscated wireless communication devices will be returned only to the student's parent. Unauthorized student use of wireless communication devices may also result in other disciplinary actions in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Consistent with that Policy, the specific consequences will depend in part on the specific conduct at issue.

IV. Search of Wireless Communication Devices

A student's wireless communication device and its contents, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched whenever a School official has reason to believe the search will provide evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law, School policy, the Code of Student Conduct or a School rule. The scope of such searches must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the suspected infraction.

V. Responsibility and Security

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their personal wireless communication devices. The School is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage of any such devices brought onto School or University property or devices confiscated by a School official.

Legal Reference: G.S. 115C-76.100, enacted by Section 3.(a) of Session Law 2025-38. Cross References: Student Code of Conduct and Policy 3225, Technology Responsible Use.

Adopted: August 6, 2025