

**EMPLOYEE USE OF CELL PHONES**

The purpose of this policy is to address the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing/Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (MECDHH/GBSD) employee use of cell phones and other electronic communication devices (except laptops), whether MECDHH/GBSD owned or personally owned, including those that send or receive text messages, allow retrieval or sending of email or provide Internet access.

The Board recognizes that the use of cell phones and other electronic communication devices may be appropriate to the efficient operations of MECDHH/GBSD and helping to ensure the safety of students and staff and the security of MECDHH/GBSD property.

MECDHH/GBSD employees may not use cell phones or electronic communication devices, whether MECDHH/GBSD owned or personally owned, for non-school related business while they are engaged in instruction or supervision of students or of a school sponsored activity, or in any other manner that interferes with attending to and/or carrying out their job responsibilities. Employees are free to use their personal cell phones and other electronic communication devices during off-duty, lunch or break times.

Use of cell phones and electronic communication devices, whether MECDHH/GBSD owned or personally owned, in a manner that violates Board policies, administrative procedures and/or state or federal laws will result in discipline consistent with Article 14 of the MSEA Professional/Supervisory and Support Services Unit Contract.

In the interest of safety, MECDHH/GBSD employees are prohibited from using hand-held cell phones and electronic communications devices while driving MECDHH/GBSD owned motor vehicles, whether transporting students, other staff or driving alone. MECDHH/GBSD employees are also prohibited from using hand-held cell phones and electronic communications devices while transporting students in private vehicles.

MECDHH/GBSD may provide cell phones or other electronic communication devices to some employees to assist them in carrying out their employment-related duties on or off school property. The Executive Director/designee shall have the discretion as to which employees will be provided MECDHH/GBSD owned cell phones and other electronic communication devices, based upon need and availability.

MECDHH/GBSD owned cell phones and other electronic communications devices are to be used for school-related business purposes and are not intended for personal use except in emergencies involving employee health or safety. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of MECDHH/GBSD owned cell phones/electronic communications devices or the information stored on them.

#### SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

Employees operating a school bus or other MECDHH/GBSD vehicle transporting students are prohibited from operating the vehicle while using a cell phone or other electronic communications device, whether personally owned or issued by the MECDHH/GBSD, except during an emergency situation or to call for assistance in the event of a mechanical breakdown or other mechanical problem, and then only when the vehicle is stopped or parked.

**Adopted: December 4, 2014**