



Board of Education

**POLICY 5140**  
**STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN**  
**TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENTS**

Effective: July 17, 2025

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**Policy Outline**

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**I. Policy Value Statement**

The Board of Education of Howard County (Board) is committed to ensuring access to telehealth services in schools to provide students with access to healthcare onsite at the school and during the school-day in middle and high schools.

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate to Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) students, parents, and employees the procedures and guidelines for supporting student participation in telehealth appointments in middle and high schools.

**III. Standards**

- A. Middle and high school students will have access to parent/student-initiated telehealth appointments during the school day as outlined in the HCPSS Telehealth Manual. This includes the in-person presence of a parent and a signed consent form to the school from the parent.
- B. All HCPSS school-based employees supporting telehealth appointments will comply with the legal requirements for confidentiality. Schools will choose a location that ensures privacy of telehealth appointments.

**IV. Responsibilities**

- A. The Superintendent/designee will ensure the policy is published in the school system's student handbook.

- B. The Superintendent/designee will develop a Telehealth Procedures Manual and waiver, which will be made available on the HCPSS website, individual school websites, and in print at each individual school Student Services offices.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will ensure HCPSS students, parents, and employees are made aware of this policy, implementation procedures and requirements each school year.
- D. School-based administrators will review this policy with HCPSS Student Services staff annually, prior to the start of each year.

#### **V. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy within the limits set forth by this policy.

#### **VI. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Confidential – Information that is private, not intended to be shared with others unless they have a legitimate educational interest.
- B. Confidentiality – Assurance that school system officials protect personally identifiable information (PII) and do not disclose or transmit records related to students or the PII contained therein to unauthorized parties.
- C. HCPSS Employee – Any individual who is a permanent or temporary employee of the HCPSS whose compensation is paid in whole or part by the Board, including but not limited to, school-based administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, paraeducators, and other school-based and Central Office support staff.
- D. Informed Consent – The process by which a parent is given all necessary information about a proposed activity, program, or service involving their child, such as medical treatment, educational assessments, or participation in research, and voluntarily agrees to it.
- E. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
  - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 2. Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.

3. Custodian – A person or agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody, or control over the student but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian, as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article, §7-101 (c) (Informal Kinship Care) or has been issued a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Verification of Release form entering into a custodial arrangement with the federal government.
  6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a State agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- F. Parent/Student-Initiated Telehealth – Telehealth services between a student or parent and a health care practitioner external to a school when the LEA has no formal agreement with the health care practitioner to provide services to its students.
- G. Student – An individual enrolled in a public school system or non-public school in the state who is 5 years of age or older and under 22 years of age.
- H. Telehealth – A mode of delivering health care, including mental health/therapy, services through the use of telecommunications technologies by a health care practitioner to a patient at a different physical location than the health care practitioner. For the purpose of school telehealth appointments, the patient is the HCPSS student.

## VII. References

- A. Legal  
Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g  
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191  
Md. Ann. Code, Education Article, §4-143
- B. Board Policies  
Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media  
Policy 9010 Attendance  
Policy 9050 Student Records
- C. Relevant Data Sources

- D. Other  
Guidelines for the Availability for Student Participation in Telehealth  
Appointments in Secondary Schools, Maryland State Department of Education,  
Division of Student Support and Federal Programs, November 14, 2024.

### VIII. History<sup>1</sup>

ADOPTED: July 17, 2025  
REVIEWED:  
MODIFIED:  
REVISED:  
EFFECTIVE: July 17, 2025

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<sup>1</sup> Key: ***Adopted***-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; ***Reviewed***-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; ***Modified***-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; ***Revised***-The date the Board took action on a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; ***Effective***-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.

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**I. Telehealth Procedures Manual**

The Telehealth Procedures Manual will include procedures that must be followed for telehealth appointments and will be made available to HCPSS students, parents, and employees.

**A. Parent Participation**

The parent must be present at the school and monitor their child for the duration of any telehealth appointment.

**B. Release of Records**

The parent is required to provide permission for HCPSS school-based employees to communicate with outside providers who are engaging in telehealth with a student during the school day.

**C. Communication with HCPSS School-based Employees**

1. School-based employees will be made aware of the recommendations of the telehealth providers on an as-needed basis.
2. Health Services employees may consider integrating telehealth into a student health plan to enhance access to care and improve health outcomes.

**D. The Telehealth Procedures Manual will be reviewed by the Department of Student Well-Being, at least annually.****II. Informed Consent**

- A. Parents must provide written informed consent for student participation in telehealth appointments at school.
- B. Parents should consider the need for telehealth versus missing instructional time to have their child's needs met.
- C. Parents must agree to collaborate with HCPSS school-based employees to help ensure that students keep up with missed instruction.

- D. The consent form will be included in the students' cumulative record.

### **III. Confidentiality**

- A. HCPSS school-based administrators will choose a location that ensures privacy of telehealth appointments.
- B. HCPSS school-based employees supporting telehealth appointments will ensure confidentiality and that students' information is kept private.
- C. Students and their parents who participate in telehealth appointments in schools will be made aware of the limits of privacy. Private information may be disclosed in order for HCPSS school-based employees to facilitate a student's participation in a telehealth appointment and ensure student safety.
- D. Schools will ensure records from telehealth appointments, including schedule of appointments, consent forms, and [HCPSS Release of Information Document](#), are confidential, in accordance with Policy 9050 Student Records.
- E. HCPSS school-based employees will ensure that appropriate records are sent to providers during care coordination activities.

### **IV. Access to Telehealth Appointments**

- A. Evaluating Fit
  - 1. Schools will assess the student's condition, the context and environment in which the student interacts, the student's comfort using technology, and the nature and complexity of the service and/or intervention required and/or being requested by the school.
  - 2. Schools will develop plans to address students' reasons for telehealth, specifically students who may have chronic needs and/or disabilities. The school must offer the same access to telehealth appointments for all students regardless of disability status.
  - 3. Schools will ensure that telehealth services support both the health and educational outcomes of students with special needs (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan), will be provided telehealth services to complement their accommodations or services, if appropriate.
  - 4. Reasonable modifications may be required to ensure students with disabilities have the same access to telehealth appointments.

**B. Scheduling**

1. Each school-based administrator will identify a HCPSS school-based employee as the point of contact for facilitating telehealth appointment scheduling procedures.
2. Appointments must be scheduled in advance. Middle and high schools will determine designated periods of time weekly to provide access to telehealth appointments. Once established, the schedule will be shared with families proactively to inform them of their telehealth access. Appointments will take place within a private location in the building for parent/student-initiated telehealth appointments.
  - a. A school will offer up to five (5) appointment slots per week as available based on student's needs, school schedules, and space. Schools may determine a weekly schedule with specific time slots to accommodate telehealth appointments.
  - b. The telehealth appointment schedule will allow for transition time and/or align with a natural transition during the school day.
3. Telehealth appointments will be available to families at a maximum of one (1) per quarter, per child. School-based administrators in collaboration with the principal/designee will monitor the scheduling of appointments to ensure equity.
4. Each middle and high school will establish a protocol for scheduling and canceling appointments, including who is managing the telehealth appointment schedule.

**V. In-Person Support Protocols**

**A. Parent Participation**

The parent is responsible for ensuring student safety during the telehealth appointment. HCPSS school-based employees will provide resources (e.g. hotline numbers, referral to Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center) as needed, in the event of a crisis during the telehealth appointment.

**B. Transition from Telehealth Appointment**

1. School-based administrators will develop clear expectations and parameters for transitions to and from telehealth appointments during the school day to support student safety in navigating the school building and/or limiting missed instructional time.

2. Designated HCPSS school-based employees will monitor the start and end times of telehealth appointments to ensure that the student transitions back to class at the conclusion of the appointment.
3. If transitions are challenging for a student, school staff will discuss with parents the feasibility and appropriateness of telehealth for students who are unable to transition independently.

C. Missed Instruction

Missed instruction due to a telehealth appointment will be made up in accordance with Policy 9010 Attendance. Missing class instruction due to a telehealth appointment would be considered a lawful absence for that portion of the day.

## **VI. Provision of Services**

A. Location for Telehealth Appointments

1. The school-based administrator will identify a private space that includes:
  - a. Internet access
  - b. Seating option(s)
  - c. Flat surface to hold device (laptop, tablet)
  - d. A nearby electrical outlet to accommodate the placement of the device
  - e. Is not a bathroom or a closet
2. Other considerations for the selected location include:
  - a. Quiet and private for a confidential telehealth appointment
  - b. Accessible to all students, including those with disabilities
  - c. Elements that help create a calm and welcoming environment

B. Technology for Telehealth Appointments:

1. Parents may provide a personal device upon arrival for the telehealth appointment.
2. In the event that the parent does not have a personal device, the student should utilize their HCPSS-issued Chromebook. HCPSS school-based employees will ensure that a charger is available for the students' device.
3. HCPSS school-based employees should have another HCPSS Chromebook available as a back-up for the telehealth appointment.
4. Students will comply with established policies regarding the use of computers, tablets, or other devices equipped with high-resolution cameras



and microphones for clear communication. (Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media)

## **VII. Monitoring**

Policy 5140 implementation procedures will be overseen by the Department of Student Well-Being.

## **VIII. History<sup>1</sup>**

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