

General Personnel

Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

Purpose of this Policy

The Board of Education recognizes that electronic communication, including communication via social networking sites, may be useful for parent/guardian/student/staff member communication regarding District matters. However, electronic communications also have the potential of creating a disruption in the school environment. This policy is intended to minimize that disruption and ensure that electronic communications between employees and students, between employees and parents/guardians, or between employees are appropriate and within the goals and policies of the District.

Definitions

Includes - Means “includes without limitation” or “includes, but is not limited to.”

Social media - Refers to media for social interaction, using highly accessible communication techniques through the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. Examples include *Facebook*, *LinkedIn*, *MySpace*, *Twitter*, and *YouTube*.

Personal technology - Any device that is not owned or leased by the District or otherwise authorized for District use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication or information networks. This includes laptops, digital cameras, smartphones such as BlackBerry®, Android®, iPhone®, and other devices, such as iPads® and iPods®.

Electronic Communication - For the purposes of this policy, forms of electronic communication include communication via telephone, text messaging, electronic mail, facsimile, instant messaging, and social networking sites.

Use of Electronic Communications for School-Related Matters

Employees who communicate electronically with students and parents/guardians about school-related matters must use District-approved or District-hosted electronic accounts and applications. This paragraph is not intended to prohibit a teacher (or other staff member) from using his/her personal telephone or mobile phone to speak with a parent/guardian after work hours if the parent/guardian is unavailable for a telephone conference during the teacher’s (or other staff member’s) work hours.

Use of Personal Technology

All District employees who bring personal technology to the workplace and/or who use personal technology and social media to communicate electronically with other employees, students, or parents/guardians shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for appropriate school relationships in policy 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct* at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct*; 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill. Admin. Code §22.20.
2. Exercise the same discretion and high standards in communicating with former students and parents/guardians of former students that employees exercise with current students, parents/guardians, and employees.

3. Report instances of abuse or neglect discovered through the use of social media or personal technology pursuant to a teacher's obligations under the *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act*.
4. Use such communication in a manner that does not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
5. Not disclose student record information including student work, photographs of students, names of students or any other personally identifiable information about students via electronic communication or social media in compliance with policy 5:130, *Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information*.
6. Refrain from using the District's logos without permission.
7. Follow Board policy 5:170, *Copyright*, and all District copyright compliance procedures.
8. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
9. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the District employee's personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.
10. Assume all risks associated with the use of electronic communications with students, parents/guardians, or other staff members that are not in compliance with this policy.
11. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

The Superintendent shall:

1. Inform District employees about this policy during an in-service on educator ethics, teacher-student conduct, and school employee-student conduct required by Board policy 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct*.
2. Develop guidelines for the use of electronic communications with students, parents/guardians, other staff members, and entities related to the District.
3. Direct Building Principals to annually:
 - a. Provide their building staff with a copy of this policy, obtain each employee's signed acknowledgment that he/she read, understood, and agrees to comply with such policy, and maintain a copy of such acknowledgement in the employee's personnel file.
 - b. Inform their building staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
 - c. Remind their building staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
4. Annually inform outside vendors of this policy.
5. Build awareness of this policy with students, parents, and the community.
6. Ensure that no one for the District, or on its behalf, requests of an employee or applicant access in any manner to his or her social networking website or requests passwords to such sites.
7. Periodically review this policy and any procedures with District employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Board.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/21B-75 and 5/21B-80

820ILCS55/10

Ill. Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/5A-102.

Code of Ethics for Ill. Educators, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006).

Pickering v. High School Dist. 205, 391 U.S. 563 (1968).

Mayer v. Monroe County Community School Corp., 474 F.3d 477 (7th Cir. 2007).

CROSS REF.: 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:120 (Ethics and Conduct), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:170 (Copyright), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: December 19, 2012

General Personnel

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The following guidelines are intended to help employees create appropriate and positive relationships with students, parents, and staff in the event that electronic communication is used.

1. Do not discuss students, parents, or co-workers on your personal social networking site, even if you do not identify them as such.
2. Do not post any personally identifiable information regarding students, parents, or co-workers on your personal social networking site.
3. When communicating with students, parents, or staff via email, be conscientious about your email. Emails should be written with the same care and consideration as any other written correspondence. Emails should be proofread, should use complete sentences, and should be respectful, even in adversarial situations.
4. Do not, under any circumstances, use email, text messages, or social networking sites to develop or maintain an inappropriate relationship with students, parents, or other staff members. Do not send or receive provocative pictures of any kind if you believe students may receive them or have access to them.
5. Be cautious about “friending” students, parents, or other staff members on social networking sites.
6. If you do “friend” students, parents, or other staff members on social networking sites, be cautious of the personal information you post on your site.
7. Review your social networking site to determine if you have any inappropriate information on your site. If you do have inappropriate information that would be accessible to students, remove it.
8. It is advisable to set your privacy settings in a way that only your “friends” can see pictures and information about you.
9. It is advisable to set your security settings to limit who can “tag” you in pictures.

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Employee Receipt of Board Policy on Personal Technology and Social Media

I, the individual whose signature appears below, acknowledge receipt of the Board policy 5:125, *Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct*. I affirm that I have read the policy and agree to comply with its requirements.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date