

## EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

### ELECTRONIC MEDIA INFO

These guidelines identify the acceptable boundaries for authorized personnel to communicate through electronic media with currently enrolled students. An employee is not subject to these limitations when the employee has a pre-existing family or social relationship with the student. For example, an employee may have a pre-existing relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational or religious organization.

### DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for purposes of this regulation:

"Electronic Media" includes, but is not limited to, the use of cell phones, text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail, web logs (blogs), electronic forums, video sharing web sites, editorial comments posted on the internet, social network sites and all forms of telecommunication.

"Communicate/Communication" is defined as the conveying of information via one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. Unsolicited contact initiated by a student through electronic media does not constitute communication.

"Authorized Personnel" is defined as any employee who possesses a certificate issued by the Texas Education Agency or the State Board for Educator Certification; possesses licensure issued by a state licensing agency (e.g. trainers, nurses, psychologists); or is responsible for the supervision of a district sponsored extracurricular activity.

### GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA:

1. Any and all communications will be limited to matters that directly relate to the employee's professional duties.
2. Employees should assume that electronic communication as described in this administrative regulation is public information.
3. In order for employees to communicate with currently enrolled students through social networking sites, employees must establish a separate, independent professional page, which is accessible to administration and parents as well as students.
4. Electronic media communication between the employee and student(s) may not occur prior to 6:00 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m. This limitation does not apply to public posts.
5. The employee must comply with records retention and destruction requirements.

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6. The employee is subject to applicable state and federal laws including confidentiality, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
7. If administration is conducting an investigation into allegations of employee misconduct, an employee must provide requested information regarding methods and contents of electronic media communications.
8. Employees may not use scheduled work time to engage in electronic communication which is not job related.
9. Posts on personal social media accounts which include student pictures and/or information may not originate from any employee's personal account. This includes sharing posts from any other individual's personal social media accounts.

PERSONAL USE

Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action up to an including termination of employment.