

Communication through Technology – Usage and Conduct

Definitions

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

Social media – Media for social interaction, using highly accessible communication techniques through the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as *Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube.*

Personal Technology – Any device that is not owned or leased by the District or otherwise authorized for District use and: (1) transmits sound, 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 smartphones such as BlackBerry®, android®, iPhone®, and other devices, such as iPads® and iPods®.

This policy governs employee use of electronic forms of communication to communicate with students, parents, other staff, and community members for school-related purposes both during and outside of school hours. Electronic forms of communication are technological means of communicating, including email, web sites, blogs, text messaging, and social media web sites such as *Twitter, Facebook,* and others. This policy applies equally to electronic communication that occurs on District technology (e.g., computers and other technology owned by the District) and on an employee’s personal technology.

Expected Conduct

All District employees who use electronic forms of communication to communicate with students, parents, other staff, and community members must adhere to the same high standards as required for face-to-face communication with those same individuals, including all relevant policies and procedures of the District.

Methods of Communication

All District employees must use District e-mail to communicate electronically with students, parents, other staff, and community members regarding District business, if feasible. Otherwise, District employees are expected to use District approved electronic forms of communication where available as an alternative method of communication with students, parents, other staff, and community members.

If an employee wishes to use personal technology to communicate with students, parents, or members of the community about District business, the employee must have prior written approval from building administration before doing so. Any employee who communicates with students, parents, other staff, and community members about District business through such electronic forms of communication (regardless of whether it occur on District technology or personal technology) has no expectation of privacy from the District regarding that communication. Use of electronic forms

of communication to communicate with students, parents, and members of the community regarding District business is an agreement by the District employee that the District, at its discretion, may require the employee to relinquish control over personal electronic forms of communication and/or personal technology for the District to review such communication.

Confidentiality of Student Information and School Student Records

District employees must comply with all policies and procedures that govern confidentiality of student information when using electronic forms of communication on both District and personal time, including posting images and private information about students on electronic forms of communication. It is the District employee's responsibility to maintain school student records as required by the *Illinois School Student Records Act*, even if those records are stored on personal electronic forms of communication or personal technology.

All District employees who use personal technology and social media 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*; 5.100, *Staff Development Program*; 5.120, *Ethics and Conduct*; 6.235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, 7.20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
3. Personal technology and social media may not be used to share, publish, or transmit information about or images of students and/or District employees without proper approval. For District employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.
4. Refrain from using the District's logos without permission and follow all District copy right compliance procedures.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Discipline for Misconduct

District employees can be subject to discipline in accordance to contractual provisions and/or Board Policy 5.209, *Employee Discipline*, for misconduct that occurs through District or personal technology, even if that misconduct takes place outside of normal school/business hours and/or on an employee's personal technology, if there is a sufficient connection between the misconduct and the employee's job functions. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students, parents, and other staff that is inappropriate as defined by District policy.

Notification of Policy

The Superintendent or designee shall inform District employees about this policy. Building principals shall provide a copy of this policy to District employees annually, obtaining a signature signifying receipt by the employee.

Adopted: 3/19/12

Revised: 2/27/17