

SECTION: OPERATIONS

TITLE: Teacher-Student
Communications

ADOPTED: February 22, 2016

Lebanon School District

Teacher-Student Communications	
1. Purpose	<p>These procedures and guidelines discourage improper employee electronic communication with students at all district schools and improper interaction shall be handled following applicable laws and policies. The Lebanon School District shall not be civilly liable for any electronic communication by an employee with a student that is prohibited as provided in this policy.</p>
2. Definitions	<p>Electronic Communication - includes any direct communication facilitated by voice or text-based telecommunication devices, or both, computers, as well as those devices that facilitate indirect communication using an intermediate method, including, but not limited to Internet-based social networks. It shall also include the transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature, in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectric, or photooptical system and pertains to both personal and School Board-issued devices.</p> <p>Educational Services - constitutes provision of direct and indirect classroom instruction, as well as extracurricular activities provided by the Lebanon School District.</p> <p>Electronic mail - the transmission of text-based information or communication by use of the Internet, computers, a facsimile machine, a pager, a cellular telephone, a video recorder, or any other electronic device or means sent to a person identified by a unique address or address number and received by that person.</p> <p>Text messaging - the transmission of text between cellular telephone numbers or from an email address to a cellular telephone number.</p>

<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>Computers - pertains to and includes: (i) desktops; (ii) workstations; (iii) electronic readers or devices in the nature of an ipad or kindle; (iv) laptops; (v) servers; (vi) routers; (vii) digital switches; (viii) smart phones; (ix) PDA's; and (x) any other digital device in the nature of any of the foregoing.</p> <p>Social networks - locations on the Internet where users may interact with other users -- examples are Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and other social network sites available on the internet.</p> <p>Improper or inappropriate communications - any communication between employee and student, regardless of who initiates the communication, that may be viewed as derogatory, sexual or lewd in content, threatening or harassing, discriminatory, simple fraternization, or suggestive in nature.</p> <p>Cloud application - shall mean any service or resource available on the internet including such services or resources as virtual servers or any electronic storage that is outside of the School District's firewall, including such things as an a Google or Google Chrome account; My Drive; Skydrive; Adobe Creative Cloud; Dropbox; Evernote; and other similar services.</p> <p>Student record - shall mean any item of information gathered within or outside the district that is directly related to an identifiable student.</p> <p>Group Communication - shall mean communication between an individual and a group of people, between a group of people and another group of people, or within the group itself. A group is normally considered as a collection of people that number 3 or more.</p> <p>The Lebanon School District prohibits any type of close personal relationship between a school employee and a student that may be reasonably perceived as unprofessional, such as excessive personal attention outside of school. School employees shall not communicate with students, entertain students, socialize with students, or spend an excess amount of time with students in such a manner as to reasonably create the</p>
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impression to other students, their parents, or the public that an improper relationship exists.

All electronic communication conducted by an employee with a student must be relative to the educational services provided to the student and shall be delivered by means provided by or otherwise made available by the School District for this purpose. Approved School District electronic communication methods are School District email, school-sponsored teacher websites, school websites, school-provided phones and other electronic communication that is approved by the Lebanon School District.

School District employees are prohibited from using any School District electronic communication with a student for a purpose not related to educational services, except for communication with an immediate family member, if such communication is specifically authorized by the School Board.

School District employees shall not use personal profiles on social network sites with or to communicate with any student or parent of the School District. School District employees may create a separate professional social media page for communication with students and parents.

School District employees are prohibited from communicating with any student while on a disciplinary suspension or administrative leave without express prior written approval from the Superintendent or the Director of Human Resources;

School District employees are prohibited from downloading or saving any student record on any computer, network or cloud application owned, leased or in an account possessed by the employee that is not a computer or network drive that is owned or leased by the school district.

All communication must be transparent by maintaining openness, visibility, and accountability; accessible and considered a matter of record; and professional by using correct grammar and tone and choosing an appropriate subject matter and word choice.

<p>4. Reporting Violations</p>	<p>All text messaging conducted by an employee with a student must be relative to the educational services provided to the student. Text messaging should be used sparingly and secondary to electronic communication</p> <p>With the exception of group communication, electronic communication, text messaging, phone communication, and/or social network communication from any school employee to any student may only occur after a written opt-in is received from a parent or legal guardian of the student.</p> <p>The occurrence of any electronic communication made by an employee with a student using means other than ones provided by or made available by the School District shall be reported in writing by the employee to the Principal prior to reassuming regular duties, but no later than 24 hours after the occurrence or knowledge of the occurrence.</p> <p>Student-initiated communication that may be construed as inappropriate in content, as defined in this policy, must be reported in writing to the Principal no later than 24 hours after the occurrence or knowledge of the occurrence.</p> <p>Records of any reported communication shall be maintained by the Principal for a period of at least one year.</p> <p>It is the duty of each School District employee to comply with this policy. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, and, in extreme circumstances, may constitute willful neglect of duty.</p>
<p>5. Violations</p>	<p>Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The employee's utilizing the School District or personal electronic communication system with a student for non-educational services.b. The employee's failure to report an instance of communication using a non-School District electronic communication system.c. The employee's contacting a student when the

parents have not opted into individual communication with employees.

Responses to violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Any violations or suspected violations of this policy should be reported to the Principal immediately. The Principal will promptly, thoroughly and fairly investigate reports of an alleged failure by a school employee or student.
- b. The investigation shall include dates, the name of the person reporting the allegation, and the specific allegation made.
- c. The Principal shall meet with the employee to document his/her response to the allegation. The employee shall be required to cooperate fully with the investigation.
- d. All information from the investigation shall be provided to the Superintendent.
- e. Appropriate action shall be taken that is consistent with the results of the investigation and the legal requirements afforded by law. Violations of this policy or any implementing regulations or procedures may result in discipline of the employee/student up to and including termination of employment/suspension of the student or employee.
- f. Any alleged violation of the Board's Policy or these procedures and guidelines involving a school employee that may also be a violation of state or federal law shall be reported to the proper authorities. Some acts are considered criminal and may be subject to prosecution. The Board and School District will fully cooperate with law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney in investigating and prosecuting such criminal offenses.

In the event an employee has a previous relation or friendship with a student or a student's family, the employee does not violate this policy by communicating in a manner that exceeds the boundaries of educational services.

<p>6. "Opt-In" Procedure</p>	<p>A parent or legal guardian must submit written documentation to the Principal reflecting the desire for his or her child to be contacted individually through electronic communication, text messaging, phone communication, and/or social network communication from any school employee.</p> <p>Any group electronic communications, text messages, phone communications, and/or social network communications do not require the opt-in of the parent or legal guardian.</p>
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