

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PITTSVILLE BOARD POLICY

PERSONNEL

GENERAL PERSONNEL POLICIES

STAFF CONDUCT

STAFF USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCES 522.71 Rule

The District is committed to providing technology resources that allow employees to communicate effectively with all employees in the District. In the District's effort to maintain current technology practices, more responsibility and cooperation is required of employees to use the following core software programs and technology resources.

District employees are expected to abide by the following rules when using information technology and communication resources:

- A. **Electronic Communications:** Electronic communications are protected by the same laws and policies and are subject to the same limitations as other types of media. When creating, using, or storing messages on the network, the user should consider both the personal ramifications and the impact of the District should the messages be disclosed or released to other parties. Extreme caution should be used when committing confidential information to the electronic messages, as confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

The District may review email logs and/or messages at its discretion. Because all computer hardware, digital communication devices, and software belong to the District, users have no reasonable expectation of privacy, including the use of email, text-message, and other forms of digital communications, e.g. voicemail, Twitter™, Facebook™, etc. The use of the District's technology and electronic resources is a privilege which may be revoked at any time.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the District's electronic communications systems or devices by employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated District staff to ensure appropriate use. This monitoring may include, but is not limited by enumeration to, activity logging, virus scanning, and content scanning. External electronic storage devices are subject to monitoring if used with District resources.

- B. **User Responsibilities:** Network/Internet users (students and District employees), like traditional library users or those participating in field trips, are responsible for their actions in accessing available resources. The following standards will apply to all users (students and employees) of the network/internet:

- The user in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use. Users may not access another person's account without written permission from an administrator or immediate supervisor.
- The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by District policy.
- Users may not redistribute copyrighted programs or data without the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the copyright holder or designee in accordance with applicable copyright laws, District policy, and administrative regulations.
- The user must not knowingly attempt to access educationally inappropriate material. If a user accidentally reaches such material, the user must immediately back out of the area on the Internet containing educationally inappropriate material. The user must then notify the building administrator and/or immediate supervisor of the site address that should be added to the filtering software, so that it can be removed from accessibility.
- A user may not disable internet tracking software or implement a private browsing feature on District computers or networks. Browsing history shall only be deleted by authorized staff or in accordance with the District's technology department's directives.

- C. **Electronic Communications with Students:** Employees are prohibited from communicating with students who are enrolled in the District through electronic media, except as set forth herein. An employee is not subject to this prohibition to the extent the employee has a pre-existing social or family relationship with the student. For example, an employee may have a pre-existing relationship with a niece or nephew. The following definitions apply for purposes of this administrative rule:

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“Authorized Personnel” includes classroom teachers, counselors, dean of students, principals, directors of instruction, coaches, athletic coordinators, athletic trainers, and any other employee designated in writing by the District Administrator or a building principal.

“Communicate” means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee’s personal social network page or a blog) is not a communication; however, the employee may be subject to District regulations on personal electronic communications. Unsolicited contact from student through electronic means is not a communication.

“Electronic media” includes all forms of social media, such as, but not limited by enumeration to, the following: text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), Web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing Websites (e.g., Youtube™, LinkedIn™), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook™, MySpace™, Twitter™, LinkedIn™), and all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cellphones, and web-based applications.

D. Limited Electronic Communication with Students: Authorized personnel may communicate through electronic media with students who are currently enrolled in the District only within the following guidelines:

- 1) The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, items such as matters relating to class work, homework, and tests).
- 2) If an employee receives an unsolicited electronic contact from a student that is not within the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, items such as matters relating to class work, homework, and tests), the employee shall not respond to the student using any electronic media except to address a health or safety emergency.
- 3) The employee is prohibited from communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page (“professional page” teachers, items such as matters relating to class work, homework, and tests)) for this purpose. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee’s professional page.
- 4) Only a teacher, coach, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may communicate with students through text messaging. The employee may communicate only with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility.
- 5) The employee shall not communicate with any student outside of school day hours unless the employee has supervisory responsibilities for the student at that time. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social media network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- 6) Upon request from the administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with any one or more currently-enrolled students.
- 7) The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, including:
 - a. prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.
 - b. confidentiality of student records.
 - c. confidentiality of other District records, numbers, and private email addresses.
 - d. upon written request from a parent, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the parent’s minor student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.

E. Retention of Electronic Communications and other Electronic Media: The District archives all non-spam emails sent and/or received on the system in accordance with the District’s adopted record retention schedule. After the set time has elapsed, email communications may be discarded unless the records may be relevant to any pending litigation, pending public records request, or other good cause exists for retaining email records.

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Employees who create student records via email need to ensure that student records are retained for the period of time specified by the student records law. For this reason, the District heavily discourages the use of email as the means to communicate about individually identifiable students.

- F. **Electronic Recording:** Employees shall not electronically record by audio, video, or other means, any conversations or meetings unless each and every person present has been notified and consents to being electronically recorded. Persons wishing to record a meeting must obtain consent from anyone arriving late to such meeting. Employees shall not electronically record telephone conversations unless all persons participating in the telephone conversation have consented to be electronically recorded. These provisions are not intended to limit or restrict electronic recording of publically posted Board meeting, grievance hearings, and other Board sanctioned meeting recorded in accordance with Board policy. The provisions are not intended to limit or restrict electronic recordings involving authorized investigations conducted by District personnel, or authorized agents of the District, or electronic recordings that are authorized by the District, e.g., surveillance video, extracurricular activities, and voicemail recordings.
- G. **Compliance with Federal, State, and Local Law:** For all electronic media, employees are subject to certain state and federal laws, local policies, and administrative regulations, even when communicating regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off District property. These restrictions include:
- 1) Confidentiality of student records.
 - 2) Confidentiality of other District records, including staff evaluations and private emails.
 - 3) Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
 - 4) Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the District.
- H. **Personal Web Pages:** Employees may not misrepresent the District by creating or posting any content to any personal or non-authorized website that purports to be an official/authorized website of the District. No employee may purport to speak on behalf of the District through any personal or other-nonauthorized website.
- I. **Disclaimer:** The District's electronic systems are provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitations, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The District does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the systems are those of the individual or entity and not the District. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District electronic communications systems.

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