

## CHAPTER 6.00 - PERSONNEL

### USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES

6.82

1. Purpose. This rule requires School Board employees to use the School Board's electronic communications system and other authorized media for electronic communications in the performance of their duties, for official business and for school purposes.
2. Definitions. For purpose of this rule, the following definitions apply;
  - a. District System. The "District System" refers to the District's electronic voice and data communications system, which consists of the District telephone system, e-mail system, enterprise applications and District, school, department and classroom websites. It also includes District-owned cell phones, PDAs, radios and other communication devices that are issued to employees for official use. It includes only those social media platforms, websites and applications that have been authorized by the Superintendent under paragraph 13.
  - b. Other Authorized Media. The term "Other Authorized Media" refers to personal cell phones, smartphones, PDAs and other mobile electronic devices capable of electronic communications that are subsidized or otherwise authorized by the District for official use. It also encompasses the limited use of personal telephones and Other Mobile Devices under paragraph 8, and text messaging permitted under paragraphs 6(a) and 9.
  - c. Other Mobile Devices. The term "Other Mobile Devices" includes smartphones, PDAs and mobile tablets. Smartphones and PDAs are electronic communication devices that combine various features such as telephone, facsimile, internet and networking capabilities. iPhones and Blackberries are examples of smartphones. Mobile tablets (like iPads) offer internet access, texting and other mobile applications.
  - d. Transitory Message. For purpose of paragraphs 6(a) and 9 governing text messaging, a "Transitory Message" is one created primarily to communicate information of short-term value, with no material, on-going fiscal, administrative, legal, educational or historical significance that would reasonably require retention of such information if it were communicated in a written format. A transitory communication is not intended to transact official business, formalize or perpetuate knowledge, set policy, establish guidelines or procedures, certify a transaction or become a receipt.
3. General Rules. The general rules requiring the use of authorized media for official electronic communications (paragraph 4), prohibiting the use of

## CHAPTER 6.00 - PERSONNEL

unauthorized media for official communications (paragraph 5) and requiring the use of authorized media for official communications with students (paragraph 6) are subject to limited exceptions dealing with the use of personal telephones and Other Mobile Devices (paragraph 8), text messaging (paragraphs 6(a) and 9) and emergencies (paragraph 10).

4. Use of Authorized Media Required. Except as provided in paragraphs 6(a) and 8 - 10, employees shall use the District System and Other Authorized Media for electronic communications in the performance of their duties, for official business, and for school purposes. In such electronic communications, School Board employees shall comply with Rule 6.83 regarding acceptable use of the District System, Rule 9.021 governing civility and Rule 9.043 regarding political activity.
5. Use of Unauthorized Media Prohibited. As stated in paragraph 4, School Board employees are required to use the District System and Other Authorized Media for electronic communications in the course of their employment. Except as provided in paragraphs 6(a), 8 - 10, and 13, District employees shall not use personal e-mail, personal electronic messaging, Facebook, Twitter, other social networking services or other unauthorized media for official communications. The purpose of this rule is to comply with Florida law governing the creation, retention and disposal of public records, and to promote uniformity and professionalism in the District's official communications.
6. Electronic Communications with Students - Official Purposes. School Board employees are required to use the District System and Other Authorized Media for electronic communications with students in the performance of their employment duties and for school purposes. The District e-mail system, classroom websites, eSchool Plus Home Access Center and other District provided systems adequately provide the means to electronically communicate with students. Conversely, the School Board has determined that personal e-mail, text messaging, social networking and other personal electronic media are inappropriate and undesirable to use for official communication with students because such use may create the appearance of casual and unprofessional interaction with students, particularly when the interaction takes place outside the school setting, off-campus or after school hours. Furthermore, the use of personal electronic media may create an appearance of inappropriate association with students, and also may implicate District legal obligations in regard to the maintenance and retention of information and records. Accordingly, except for limited use of personal telephones and Other Mobile Devices as provided in paragraph 8, transitory text messages for extracurricular purposes as provided in paragraph 6(a), emergency situations as provided in paragraph 10, and authorized social media as provided by paragraph 13, School Board employees shall not use personal e-mail, text messaging, electronic messaging,

## CHAPTER 6.00 - PERSONNEL

Facebook, Twitter, other social networking services, or other unauthorized media to communicate with students for school-related purposes.

- a. Extracurricular Activities Exception. Coaches, club advisors and other employees may text or use personal e-mail for Transitory Messages as defined in paragraph 2(d) to and from students under their supervision in extracurricular activities, when there is a need to communicate with participating students about the activity, such as to notify them about a change in the time or place of practice.
7. Electronic Communications with Students - Other Purposes. Paragraph 6 requires the use of the District System and Other Authorized Media to communicate with students for official purposes. However, paragraph 6 does not apply to employees' interactions with students outside the realm of their employment with the District and professional duties. If District employees choose to engage in social networking or other forms of electronic communications with students off-campus on their own time, they should be mindful of the requirements of the Code of Ethics and Principles of the Education Profession in Florida. District employees are strongly discouraged from any interaction with students that might create an appearance of inappropriate association or unprofessional conduct.
8. Limited Use of Personal Telephones and Other Mobile Devices. Unless authorized for official use under paragraph 2(b), it is generally not appropriate for District employees to use personal telephones and Other Mobile Devices for routine employment-related calls, and employees should use the District telephone system or Other Authorized Media for such calls. However, the occasional use of personal telephones for employment purposes is not prohibited when an employee is off campus or for some other reason does not have access to the District telephone system or Other Authorized Media. Furthermore, an employee may use a personal PDA, smartphone, computer or other mobile electronic device (such as an iPad, Nook or Kindle) to remotely access the District System, provided they comply with the District's Acceptable Use Policy and applicable security procedures.
9. Text Messaging - Official Communications with Non-Students. As stated in paragraph 6, text messaging is not authorized for official communications with students, except in emergencies and under the extracurricular activity circumstances described in paragraph 6(a). For other official electronic communications, employees should use District e-mail rather than text messaging. However, employees may utilize text messaging in the course of their employment for the limited purpose of sending or receiving Transitory Messages. Illustrative examples of permissible Transitory Messages are posted in the guidelines and procedures that accompany this rule. Provided, however, that no employee shall text message while operating a motor vehicle.

## CHAPTER 6.00 - PERSONNEL

10. Emergencies. This rule does not apply in emergency situations when communication by any means is necessary out of concern for the lives, safety or welfare of students, staff or members of the public.
11. School and Department Websites. School and department webmasters may post and update employee only (internal) information using the District's Inside SJCSD webpages (accessed by employees via the internet or via the District network) only under the management and control of the District's Information Technology ("IT") Department. School and department webmasters may post and update public webpages (accessed by the public via the internet) only under the management and control of the District's IT Department.

Schools and departments are prohibited from installing, configuring, posting or operating any internal or publicly accessed servers that are not authorized, managed and controlled by the IT Department.

12. Staff Websites. Teachers may seek to include a "class" or "teacher" web page as part of the involved school's public website. In this event, staff shall coordinate with the school webmaster to arrange for inclusion of the class or teacher web page as a part of the school's website.
13. Guidelines and Procedures. The Superintendent is authorized to adopt guidelines and procedures to implement and administer this rule. In particular, the Superintendent may adopt guidelines and procedures that authorize the use of other social media platforms, websites and applications as part of the District System for school or District purposes, subject to any restrictions and conditions that the Superintendent may impose on the use of such an authorized social medium.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

**1001.41, F.S.**

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:**

**1001.42; 1012.32, F.S.**

**HISTORY:**

**Adopted: 05/15/12**

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