

## **STAFF MEMBERS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to the following prohibited behaviors:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.
  - a. Teachers may not list current students as “friends” on networking sites.
  - b. All e-contacts with students should be through the district’s computer and telephone system.
  - c. All contacts and messages by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members, except messages involving medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the athletic director and the school principal.
  - d. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers to students without prior written approval of the district and the parent of the minor student.
  - e. Improper private contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
4. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology

As per state law, employees are discouraged from sharing content or comments containing the following when directed at a citizen of the State of Oklahoma:

- 1) Obscene sexual content or links to obscene sexual content;
- 2) Abusive behavior and bullying language or tone;
- 3) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; and
- 4) Disclosure of any information required to be maintained as confidential by law, regulation, or internal policy.

“Social networking or “social media” means interaction with external websites or services based upon participant contributions to the content. Types of social media include social and professional networks, blogs, micro blogs, video or phone sharing and social bookmarking; and

“Comment” means a response to an article or social media content submitted by a commenter.

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will download the offensive material and promptly bring that misconduct to the attention of the school district’s legal counsel for review.

Employees who engage in any of the above-referenced prohibited behaviors are subject to the possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

**REFERENCE: 74 O.S. § 840-8.1**

**\*A copy of this policy shall be distributed to each affected employee by email.**