

**MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Milford, Delaware 19963**

**POLICY**

**4226**

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Milford School District believes that responsible use of electronic communication and social media is essential to protect students, maintain professional boundaries, and uphold trust in Staff Members and Volunteers. For purposes of this Board Policy, “Staff Member” means any person who is employed by the District, and “Volunteer” means a person who performs a service to the Milford School District without pay.

This Board Policy applies to Staff Members’ and Volunteers’ use of electronic communication and social media during working and non-working hours, whether using District equipment or personal devices. It supplements all other Board Policies governing staff and volunteer conduct, including Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, Anti-Discrimination, Confidentiality, and Cell Phone Use During Working Hours. Any Staff Member or Volunteer with questions about the application of this Board Policy will seek guidance from the Director of Human Resources.

**Guidelines for Staff Members’ and Volunteers’ Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media**

Staff Members and Volunteers are expected to use electronic communication and social media responsibly to protect students, maintain professional boundaries, and uphold the trust placed in the District.

**Personal Connections on Social Media**

Staff Members and Volunteers are expected to use discretion when connecting with others on personal social media accounts.

- **Supervisory Boundaries:** Staff Members and Volunteers in supervisory roles may not initiate personal social media connection requests with subordinates. Supervisors may accept a request from a subordinate but should consider whether doing so is appropriate.
- **Student Boundaries:** Staff Members and Volunteers may not initiate or accept personal social media connection requests, follows, or similar online connections

with students, unless the interaction occurs solely in the role of a Parent(s)/Guardian(s).

### Prohibited Conduct

Staff Members and Volunteers are expected to maintain professional behavior online and via electronic communication. Online conduct is subject to the same expectations established in all Board Policies. Staff Members and Volunteers engaging in prohibited conduct may be subject to corrective action up to and including termination. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Promoting or endorsing illegal activity, including illegal drug use or underage alcohol consumption.
- Promoting or endorsing violence.
- Promoting or endorsing discrimination or harassment based on legally protected characteristics.
- Disclosing confidential information.
- Making or accepting social media or electronic connection requests with students, except when acting as a Parent(s)/Guardian(s).
- Engaging in online conduct that negatively affects professional credibility, public trust, or the ability to effectively perform their role within the District.
- Engaging in online conduct that disrupts District or school operations.
- Publishing or posting recordings or images (audio, video, or photographs) taken on District property to personal social media or public platforms without prior authorization, except when acting in the capacity of a Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or relative. This restriction does not apply to recordings or images taken for legitimate instructional, supervisory, or District-approved purposes.

### Permitted Electronic Communication With Students

Electronic communication with a student is allowed only when it relates to legitimate job responsibilities. If communication takes place outside District-approved platforms, written consent from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) must be submitted to both the School Administrator and the District before any messages are sent. Other forms of communication, including social media, online chats, online gaming, email, phone, or text, are permitted only if the staff member or a parent/caregiver is copied or included in the conversation. All virtual communications, such as email, video, or text, must use approved organizational platforms. Disappearing-message applications (for example, Snapchat) may not be used to communicate with students unless messages are sent in a multi-recipient broadcast format, with all responses shared publicly within that

broadcast.

### Duty to Report

Staff Members and Volunteers must report any known or reasonably suspected violation of this Board Policy to a School Administrator or District Administrator. Reports will be handled in accordance with applicable Board Policies. Failure to report may result in corrective action.

### Notice of Intent to Monitor

Online content posted by Staff Members and Volunteers may be discovered or reported to the District through monitoring efforts, complaints, or other legitimate means. Such information will be handled according to Board Policies. Staff Members and Volunteers are reminded that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding information posted online.

ADOPTED: 3/24/14  
AMENDED: 4/20/26  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 4/31