

Employee Standards of Conduct

DH (REGULATION)
(EXHIBIT)

Exhibit A Parent Consent for Electronic Communications Between Employee and Student for Social Relationship Exception

Exhibit B Summary of Restrictions on Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students (3 pages)

Parent Consent for Electronic Communications Between Employee and Student for Social Relationship Exception

Part 1: To be completed by the NISD employee seeking documentation of legitimate social relationship with student. Employee must submit the completed form to his/her supervisor. The supervisor will maintain the form with the employee's records.

NISD Employee: _____ Campus: _____

Job Title: _____

Principal/Supervisor Name: _____

Part 2: To be completed by parent of student who has a legitimate social relationship with an NISD employee and wants to give permission for the NISD employee to communicate electronically with the student.

Dear _____ (Principal/Supervisor of NISD Employee):

My student, _____ ("Student") has a social or family relationship with
_____ ("Employee"), as described in the Employee Handbook and the
Summary of Restrictions on Electronic Communications between Employees and Students. The
relationship between the Student and Employee is described as follows:

_____.

I approve of the Employee communicating with my student electronically, through text message, email, and social media. I acknowledge:

1. The Employee provided me a copy of the *Summary of Restrictions on Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students*;
2. The Employee and the Student have a social or family relationship outside of school;
3. The Employee's communications with the Student are subject to exceptions from certain district regulations on electronic communications with students; and
4. I am solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the Employee and Student.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Name (printed)

Summary of Restrictions on Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communication between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the district is prohibited. Employees are not required to provide students with their personal phone number or email address.

Exception: Social or Family Relationship

An employee is not subject to the provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent, DH (Regulation) (Exhibit), Exhibit A. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol.
- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school.
- The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic media with students:

- *Electronic communications* means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes email, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website.
- *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. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a *communication*.
- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

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Electronic Communications with Students

An employee who communicates electronically with students shall observe the following:

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
 - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message.
 - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
 - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable the administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communication with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
 - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records.
 - Copyright law.
 - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently enrolled students.

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- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages is not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.