

## **Employee Guidelines Friendswood ISD Responsible Use Policy**

As a Friendswood ISD employee you are given access to Friendswood ISD's network and technology resources. At Friendswood ISD, the network and technology resources are a way of enhancing the mission to teach the skills, knowledge, and behaviors students will need to succeed in the global community. These technologies may include, but are not limited to, district-provided equipment as well as personal devices. In accepting this agreement, employees acknowledge the following rules and conditions.

### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS (TEC Section 38.027) (Policy DH)**

Electronic communication 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 e-mails, text messages, instant messages, and any communications made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website. (TEC Section 38.027)

A certified employee, licensed employee, or any other employee may use electronic communication, as this term is defined by law, with currently enrolled students on about matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities.

In accordance with ethical standards applicable to all District employees (see applicable standards attached to this RUP), an employee shall be prohibited from using electronic communications in a manner that constitutes prohibited harassment or abuse of a District student; adversely affects the student's learning, mental health, or safety; includes threats of violence against the student; reveals confidential information about the student; or constitutes an inappropriate communication with a student, as described in the Educators' Code of Ethics.

An employee shall have no expectation of privacy in electronic communications with students. Each employee shall comply with the District's requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic communication.

An employee is not subject to 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. 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.

### **Text Messaging (Policy DH)**

*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. The message content must be within the scope of the extracurricular activity.*

### **Employees Who Use Electronic Media to Communicate with Students Shall Observe the following:**

- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- 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 communication the employee uses to communicate with any one or more currently-enrolled students.
- 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).
- If communicating electronically with a single student, the employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on the message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message. If the parent or guardian does not have means to communicate electronically, copy your supervisor or colleague. (Exception: Employees may communicate individually with students via school phone landlines during normal business hours and via school email, @fisdk12.net accounts, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.)
- As an alternative to sending a message to the student's parent, the employee may send a copy of the message to his or her own District e-mail address in order to retain a printable record if the employee has a device that provides this capability.
- 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 administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9 p.m. and 7 a.m. unless an extra or co-curricular activity makes communication necessary. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. (See Policy DHB)
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.

### **Reporting Improper Communication(Policy DH)**

An employee shall notify his or her supervisor when a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee.

### **Disclosing Personal Information(Policy DH)**

An employee shall not be required to disclose his or her personal e-mail address or personal phone number to a student.

### **PERSONAL USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION (Policy DH)**

All employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic communication as for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic communication violates state or federal law or District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- I will use technology in a meaningful, safe, and responsible way.
- I understand I represent the school district in all my online activities. Additionally, I understand what I do on social media sites should not reflect negatively on students, teachers, or on the district.
- I will use technology resources productively, appropriately, and primarily for school-related purposes. I will avoid using any technology resources in such a way which would disrupt the activities of others.
- I will respond by telephone to any outside party who sends an email communicating a problem or concern that would require more than a brief factual response. Email will only be used to provide outside parties with information.
- I will not use email to communicate about a potentially volatile situation or one which requires extensive explanation.
- I will not attempt to bypass or disable district content filters. Certain webpages may be unblocked upon request to Technology Services depending on content and technical capability.
- I will not gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to resources or information.
- I will not attempt to send, receive, or view any communications or materials that are inappropriate or harmful to individuals or groups or in violation of federal, state, or district regulations. This includes but is not limited to inappropriate language; threatening or racist material; obscene material; pornographic or sexually oriented material or illegal activities.
- I will not use District resources for political advertising, lobbying, or campaigning.
- I will not use District resources for the promotion of commercial goods or services for personal gain.
- I understand all district equipment, the district network, and my district account are property of FISD and can be monitored or collected at any time.
- I am responsible for monitoring student use of technology either district provided or a personal device while students are under my supervision.
- I understand that District administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.

I will use technology in accordance with the laws of the United States and the State of Texas:

- Criminal Acts – These include, but are not limited to, “hacking” or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, harassing email, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, child pornography, vandalism, and /or unauthorized tampering with computer systems.
- Libel laws – Publicly defaming people through the published material on the Internet, email, etc.
- Copyright violations – Copying, selling or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (users should assume all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright), engaging in plagiarism (using other’s words or ideas as your own).

I understand in the event that I am issued a portable electronic device to facilitate student instruction and enhance student achievement I am responsible for the device and will care for the equipment in such a manner as to prevent loss or damage. A portable electronic device is defined as a laptop or any small, handheld computing device. I further understand that:

- Portable electronic devices are issued to staff primarily as instructional tools and therefore need to be brought to school daily.
- In the event of damage, loss or theft of the portable electronic device, I will immediately notify my principal or his/her designated representative for repair or replacement matters.
- In the case of damages or loss which occur due to my intentional act, neglect or abuse of the portable electronic device, or because of my failure to follow the responsible use policy, I understand I may be held responsible for payment of repairs or replacement of the device at market value.
- The portable electronic device and any other accessories/components will be returned to the proper district authority immediately upon termination of my employment, or at any other time as

- specifically directed by district authority.
- If I feel it is necessary, I may seek out and purchase insurance for the device(s) issued to me.

### **RESPONSIBLE USE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

By signing this form, I acknowledge receipt of, understand, and agree to abide by the rules and standards set forth in the Friendswood Independent School District (ISD) Responsible Use of Computers and Networks Policy. I understand to gain or retain access to the Friendswood ISD computer network systems, I must sign and submit this form as directed. I further understand any violation of the Responsible Use Policy is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, monetary liability may be incurred, school disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. I as a staff member agree to abide by the rules and standards addressed in this policy as it pertains to me and to help ensure students also abide by these rules and standards as well. I understand this agreement will be in effect for the duration of my employment with the district or until the policy is revised.

### **CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARD PRACTICES FOR TEXAS EDUCATORS RELATED TO COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS**

**Standard 3.8** The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

**Standard 3.9** The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including but, not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, e-mail, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is appropriate include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- The subject matter of the communication;
- Whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- Whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

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### **Disclaimers**

- Friendswood ISD and its individual schools, administrators, faculty, and staff thereof, make no warranties of any kind for the service provided and will not be held responsible for any damage suffered by users. This includes the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, miss-deliveries, and intrusion by computer virus, or service interruption.

- Use of any information obtained via network access is at the risk of the user, and Friendswood ISD specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained.
- Friendswood ISD cannot guarantee complete protection from inappropriate material. Furthermore, it is impossible for the district or content filter to reflect each individual or family's opinions of what constitutes "inappropriate material." If a student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should immediately notify a district staff member.
- Friendswood ISD is not liable for an individual's inappropriate use of district's electronic communications systems or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, or for costs incurred by users through use of Friendswood ISD's electronic communications systems.
- The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communications systems.

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Signature

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Date