

**TECHNOLOGY CENTER PERSONNEL DIGITAL AND ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS WITH MINOR STUDENTS**

Purpose

This policy addresses all forms of group or one-on-one electronic and digital communication (including, but not limited to, email, texting, instant messages, direct messages, social media messages, messages sent through software applications, etc.) between any Center employee and minor students. This policy outlines the Center's expectations regarding school personnel's direct digital and electronic communication with minor students by requiring any such direct communication with minor students to include the minor student's parent or guardian.

School Personnel

School personnel includes teachers, administrators, school bus drivers, support personnel, or any other persons employed full-time or part-time by the Center.

Policy

Pursuant to Oklahoma law, school personnel engaging in electronic or digital communication with a minor student must include the minor student's parent or guardian in the communication, unless the communication is on a school-approved platform and is related to school and academic matters. In the case of an emergency where other parties cannot be immediately included on digital or electronic communications, the minor student's parent or guardian shall be subsequently notified of the communication as soon as possible.

Prior to the start of the school year, the Center shall compile a list of approved digital platforms for communications between Center personnel and minor students. Such platforms will automatically include in the messaging parents or guardians who opt in. The list will be posted on the Center website and distributed to Center employees. These sanctioned platforms are the only appropriate method for Center personnel to communicate directly with minor students. Outside these platforms, school personnel must affirmatively include a parent or guardian in the text message, email or other electronic communication. Failure to do so is a violation of the law and this policy.

Violations

School personnel reported to be engaging in unauthorized communications with minor students through digital or electronic platforms shall be placed on administrative leave while the Center investigates the incident and notifies the Board of Education. If the investigation results in a finding that no misconduct occurred, the school personnel shall be reinstated, and the incident shall be noted in the employee's personnel file. If the investigation finds misconduct occurred, the employee shall be disciplined according to the Center's policy, up

to and including termination of employment. Additionally, the incident shall be reported to law enforcement.

Reporting

Minor students who receive communication from school personnel in violation of this policy are encouraged to report it to a teacher, site Director or other Center official. School personnel who suspect, recognize, or encounter digital or electronic communications between a minor student or staff member that does not include a parent or guardian, or otherwise violates this policy, must report it immediately to their supervisor, the Superintendent, or other Center official.

Reference: 70 O.S. § 6-401