



BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

**TECHNOLOGY CENTER PERSONNEL DIGITAL AND ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS WITH 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 MNTC employee and certain students. This policy outlines MNTC's expectations regarding school personnel's direct digital and electronic communication with students.

Definitions

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

"Student" is any person enrolled at the technology center who does not hold a standard high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma.

Policy

Pursuant to Oklahoma law, school personnel engaging in electronic or digital communication with an individual student must include the student's parent or legal 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 student's parent or legal guardian shall be subsequently notified of the communication as soon as possible.

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

Violations

A technology center employee who is the subject of a corroborated report of engaging in unauthorized communications with an individual student through digital or electronic platforms shall be placed on administrative leave while MNTC investigates the incident and notifies the Board of Education. If the investigation results in a finding that no misconduct occurred, the employee shall be reinstated, and the incident shall not be noted in the school personnel's employee file. However, a finding of no misconduct shall be noted. If the investigation finds misconduct occurred, the employee shall be disciplined according to MNTC's policy, up to and including termination of employment. Additionally, the incident shall be reported to law enforcement.

Reporting

Students who receive communication from MNTC personnel in violation of this policy are encouraged to report it to a teacher, site director or other MNTC official. District personnel who suspect, recognize, encounter, or who has engaged in either intentional or inadvertent, digital or electronic communications between a student or staff member, that does not include a parent or legal guardian, or otherwise violates this policy, must report it immediately to their supervisor, the Superintendent, or other MNTC official.

Reference: Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 6-401