

STAFF CONDUCT IN CYBERSPACE

The Nye County School District recognizes that technological advances fast outpace the District's ability to keep up. The District also acknowledges that boundaries may be blurred between acceptable and inappropriate behavior between employees and students in this arena, particularly for young teachers who may have become accustomed to the use of the latest technology to communicate with professors.

Employees may be flattered when students ask for access to social network sites or other personal information; however, employees are strongly discouraged from text messaging using a personal phone number, "friending" students on social networks or contacting students or parents/legal guardians with personal email addresses. Fraternalization between employees and students via the Internet is prohibited except for legitimate email exchanges pertaining to educational matters (such as class assignments). Any legitimate email exchanges must not be conducted during hours which would lead a prudent person to question whether an inappropriate relationship may exist.

Employees who participate in social networking websites shall not post any data, documents, photos or inappropriate information on any website that might lead to disruption in the classroom. The determination of any questionable material will be made by the Superintendent.

The creation of false profiles or web-based identities or third persons pretending to be someone else on social networking sites may be harmful to the reputation of that person and may be legally actionable if the maker of the statement knew it was false or recklessly made and the victim has factual and physical evidence to prove these allegations.

The District is under no obligation to provide assistance to employees who violate this policy and are accused of inappropriate behavior with students. If an investigation indicates an employee has engaged in inappropriate behavior with a student, discipline will be taken in accordance with the negotiated agreement. In the absence of such an agreement, appropriate discipline will be taken, up to and including termination.

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees from the use of educational websites. Access to social networking websites for individual use during working hours is prohibited. This policy extends to student teachers and substitute teachers.

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