



Section: Operations
Title: Use of Electronic Communications
Adopted: May 16, 2013
Revised:

815.1 Use of Electronic Communications

Purpose The district recognizes the ubiquity of electronic communications such as social networking, blogging and texting in personal and professional settings. The district realizes that they can be an effective educational strategy for classroom instruction. This policy is intended to assist employees in making good decisions when communicating electronically. The policy should be used in tandem with the district's Acceptable Use Policy. Employees are reminded that they are professionals and are representatives of the district and the community in all aspects of their lives and should conduct themselves publicly in accordance with the responsibilities of public service. The district supports use of electronic communication tools for educational purposes. If an employee communicates through electronic channels, s/he must maintain professional interaction at all times in accordance with the PA State Code of Conduct.

Guidelines Interactions With Students Through Electronic Communications
Employees are discouraged from becoming friends with students on their personal social networking sites. On educational sites and blogs, employees should review and approve all comments as they are posted, since the ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is a major part of that communication environment. This allows the employee to delete any spam comments, block inappropriate posts, and delete any offensive or frivolous comments. While blogs may engage in debate and conversation with other bloggers, it is expected that employees conduct themselves in a manner reflective of a representative of the district.

Employees are encouraged to use district communication vehicles when contacting students. When this is not possible, personal electronic communication channels are to be used in a manner that is consistent with the PA State Code of Conduct and as part of the normal execution of an

employee's job responsibility.

Conduct In The Use Of Electronic Communications

Pol. 815 All information published by the employee on his/her electronic communication educational sites must comply with the district's Acceptable Use Policy and the PA Code of Conduct. Further, the employee must comply with confidentiality obligations imposed by law. For example, it is unacceptable to disclose personally identifiable information related to a student, except in strict accordance with Board Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the regulations promulgated there under.

Under no circumstances should employees discuss situations involving employee or student discipline in electronic forums. Under no circumstances shall the use of electronic communication interfere with the employee's work obligations or impact upon a staff member's effectiveness within the school system.

Pol. 814 Employees must respect all copyright laws and must reference or cite all resources as required by law. It is unacceptable to reveal or publicize confidential or proprietary information which includes, but is not limited to financial information, databases and the information contained therein, computer network access codes, and business relationships.

Privacy/Monitoring Notification

The district establishes that district sponsored electronic communication is a privilege, not a right; inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use will result in cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action. In order to ensure proper use, Colonial School District may monitor the use of electronic communication tools from time-to-time. In the event there is a reasonable suspicion that a user is using electronic tools in violation of the guidelines stated in this policy, a system administrator or teacher may gain access to electronic communication media without prior notice.

References:

Board Policy – 801, 814, 815