

# BYLAW

## READINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

BYLAWS  
0151/Page 1 of 1  
ORGANIZATION MEETING

### 0151 ORGANIZATION MEETING

The Board of Education shall organize annually at a regular meeting held on any day of the first week in January. If the organization meeting cannot take place on the scheduled date for lack of a quorum, or any other reason, the organization meeting must be properly advertised and held within three days of the original meeting date.

The meeting shall be called to order by the Board Secretary, who shall serve as presiding officer pro tempore until the election of a President and Vice President.

The Board Secretary shall administer the oath of office to new Board members.

N.J.S.A. 18A:10-3; 18A:10-5

N.J.S.A. 41:1-1; 41:1-3

Adopted: 22 March 2005

Revised:



# POLICY

PROGRAM

2412/page 1 of 2

Home Instruction Due to Health Condition

**M**

## 2412 HOME INSTRUCTION DUE TO HEALTH CONDITION

The Board of Education shall provide instructional services to an enrolled student, whether a general education student in Kindergarten through grade eight or special education student age three to fourteen, when the student is confined to the home or another out-of-school setting due to a temporary or chronic health condition or a need for treatment that precludes participation in their usual education setting, whether general or special education.

A parent's request for home instruction shall include a written determination from the student's physician documenting the projected need for confinement at the student's residence or other treatment setting for more than ten consecutive school days or twenty cumulative school days during the school year. The written determination from the student's physician shall be forwarded to the school physician, who shall either verify the need for home instruction or provide reasons for denial. The parent shall be notified concerning the school physician's verification or reasons for denial within five school days after receipt of the written determination by the student's physician.

The school district shall be responsible for the costs of providing instruction in the home or out-of-school setting either directly, or through online services, including any needed equipment, or through contract with another district Board of Education, Educational Services Commission, Jointure Commission, or approved clinic or agency. The school district shall provide instructional services within five school days after receipt of the school physician's verification or, if verification is made prior to the student's confinement, during the first week of the student's confinement to the home or out-of-school setting.

The home or out-of-school instruction shall meet the minimum standards as required in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1(c). The school district shall establish a written plan for delivery of instruction and maintain a record of delivery of instructional services and student progress. The teacher providing instruction shall be a certified teacher. The teacher shall provide instruction for the number of days and length of time sufficient to continue the student's academic progress and dependent upon the student's ability to participate.



# POLICY

## PROGRAM

2412/page 2 of 2

### Home Instruction Due to Health Condition

For a student with disabilities, the home instruction shall be consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate, and shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards. When the provision for home instruction for a student with disabilities will exceed thirty consecutive school days in a school year, the IEP team shall convene a meeting to review and, if appropriate, revise the student's IEP.

For a student without disability, the home instruction shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the requirements of the Board for promotion to the next grade level. When the provision for home instruction for a student without disability will exceed sixty calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the Child Study Team for evaluation, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14.

The Board reserves the right to withhold home instruction when the reason for the student's confinement is such as to expose a teacher to a health hazard or dangerous home situation; when a parent or other adult twenty-one years of age or older, who has been designated by the parent, is not present during the hours of instruction; or when the condition of the student is such as to preclude benefit from such instruction.

Students on home instruction will be accounted for on the attendance register as required by the Department of Education. The name of a student on home instruction will not be released at a public Board meeting or placed in a public record.

N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 through 18A:38-25

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.8; 6A:14-4.9; 6A:16-10.1

Adopted:



# REGULATION

PROGRAM  
R 2412/page 1 of 3  
Home Instruction Due to Health Condition  
M

## R 2412 HOME INSTRUCTION DUE TO HEALTH CONDITION

The Board of Education shall provide instructional services to an enrolled student whether a general education student in Kindergarten through grade eight or special education student age three to fourteen, when the student is confined to the home or another out-of-school setting due to a temporary or chronic health condition or a need for treatment that precludes participation in their usual education setting, whether general education or special education.

### A. Request For Home Instruction Due To A Temporary or Chronic Health Condition

1. The parent shall submit a request to the school counselor that includes a written determination from the student's physician documenting the projected need for confinement at the student's residence or other treatment setting for more than ten consecutive school days or twenty cumulative school days during the school year.
2. The school counselor shall forward the written determination to the school physician, who shall verify the need for home instruction. The school physician may contact the student's physician to secure additional information concerning the student's diagnosis or need for treatment, and shall either verify the need for home instruction or shall provide reasons for denial to the school counselor.
3. The school counselor shall notify the parent concerning the school physician's verification or reasons for denial within five school days after receipt of the written determination by the student's physician.

### B. Providing Services

1. The school district shall provide instructional services within five school days after receipt of the school physician's verification or, if verification is made prior to the student's confinement, during the first week of the student's confinement to the home or out-of-school setting.





# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2412/page 2 of 3

Home Instruction Due to Health Condition

2. The school district shall be responsible for the costs of providing instruction in the home or out-of-school setting either directly, through online services, including any needed equipment, or through contract with another district Board of Education, Educational Services Commission, Jointure Commission, or approved clinic or agency for the following categories of students:
  - a. A student who resides within the area served by this Board of Education and is enrolled in a public school program; or
  - b. A student who is enrolled in a nonpublic school that is located within the area served by this Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:46A-1 et seq.

C. Minimum Standards For Home or Out-of-School Instruction

1. The district shall establish a written plan for the delivery of instruction to continue the student's academic progress and to maintain a record of delivery of instructional services and student progress.
2. The teacher providing instruction shall be a certified teacher.
3. The teacher shall provide instruction for the number of days and length of time sufficient to continue the student's academic progress and dependent upon the student's ability to participate.
4. For a student with disabilities, the home instruction shall be consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate, and shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards. When the provision of home instruction will exceed thirty consecutive school days in a school year, the IEP team shall convene a meeting to review and, if appropriate, revise the student's IEP.



# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2412/page 3 of 3

Home Instruction Due to Health Condition

5. For a student without a disability, the home instruction shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the requirements of the Board of Education for promotion to the next grade level. When the provision of home instruction will exceed sixty calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the Child Study Team for evaluation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14.

Issued:



# POLICY

PROGRAM  
2417/page 1 of 2  
Student Intervention and Referral Services  
M

## 2417 STUDENT INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

The Board of Education directs the establishment and implementation in each school building in which general education students are served, a coordinated system for planning and delivering intervention and referral services designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties, and to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students' learning, behavior, or health needs in accordance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1 and 6A:16-8.2. The Board adopts this appropriate multidisciplinary team approach for planning and delivering the services required under N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.

Students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties shall be referred to the school's Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) Team. The intervention and referral services shall be provided to aid students in the general education program and may be provided for students who have been determined to need special education programs and services pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1(a). The intervention and referral services provided for students who have been determined to need special education programs and services shall be coordinated with the student's Individualized Education Program Team, as appropriate.

The functions of the system of intervention and referral services in each school building which general education students are served shall be pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.2(a) and as outlined in Regulation 2417.

Records of all requests for assistance, all intervention and referral services action plans, and all related student information shall be maintained in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations and New Jersey administrative code pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.2(a)9.

The I&RS Team shall review and assess the effectiveness of the provisions of each intervention and referral services action plan in achieving the outcomes identified in each action plan and modify each action plan to achieve the outcomes, as appropriate.



# POLICY

PROGRAM

2417/page 2 of 2

Student Intervention and Referral Services

At a minimum, the I&RS Team shall annually review the intervention and referral services action plans and the actions taken as a result of the building's system of intervention and referral services, and make recommendations to the Principal for improving school programs and services, as appropriate.

At the end of the school year, the Principal shall, in consultation with the I&RS Team, develop a report on the concerns and issues identified by the I&RS Team and the effectiveness of the services provided in achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans. This report shall be provided to the Superintendent of Schools.

N.J.A.C. 6A:14; 6A:16-8.1; 6A:16-8.2

Adopted:



# REGULATION

PROGRAM  
R 2417/page 1 of 5  
Student Intervention and Referral Services  
M

## R 2417 STUDENT INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

### A. Establishment of Intervention and Referral Services

1. The Superintendent of Schools will establish and implement in each school building in which general education students are served, a coordinated system for planning and delivering intervention and referral services designed to assist students who are experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties, and to assist staff who have difficulties in addressing students' learning, behavior, or health needs in accordance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1 and 6A:16-8.2.

### B. Functions of Intervention and Referral Services

1. The Principal in each school building in which general education students are served will establish an Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) Team. The I&RS Team will be comprised of the following:
  - a. The Principal or a member of the teaching staff other than a special education teaching staff member, who is appointed by the Principal to act on his/her behalf and with his/her authority, shall act as chairperson;
  - b. A member of the Child Study Team (CST) or an educational services staff member;
  - c. The staff member who referred the student in need of assistance or identified a school issue for discussion; and
  - d. Such other school staff members as may effectively aid in the development and implementation of the assistance plan for a particular student.



# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2417/page 2 of 5

Student Intervention and Referral Services

2. The district will provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff members who participate in each school's system for planning and providing intervention and referral services.

## C. Student Referral

1. A student not known to have a disability who is experiencing learning, behavior, or health difficulties shall be referred to the I&RS Team. This referral may be made by any school staff member or by the student's parent. The student's parent shall be informed of any such referral.
  - a. The district will provide support, guidance, and professional development to school staff members on identifying student learning, behavior, and health difficulties.
2. When it appears that a referred student may have a disability, the I&RS Team shall refer the student to the CST for evaluation pursuant to Policy 2460 for a determination of the student's eligibility for special education and/or related services.
3. The I&RS Team shall consult with the student's teacher(s), parent and any school staff member as appropriate to identify and collect information on the learning, behavior, and health difficulties of the student.
4. The school nurse may be requested to review the student's health records and inform the Principal of any health condition relevant to the student's difficulties. Any information regarding any infection with HIV virus or AIDS may be released only with the written permission of the student's parent.
5. As appropriate, the I&RS Team may consult with community-based social and health agencies that provide services to the student or the student's family.



# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2417/page 3 of 5

Student Intervention and Referral Services

6. The I&RS Team shall determine if the student's learning, behavior, and/or health difficulties may be helped with a written action plan.

## D. Intervention and Referral Services Action Plans

1. The I&RS Team shall develop and implement a written action plan for referred students that provide for appropriate school or community interventions or referrals to school and community resources, based on collected data and desired outcomes for the identified learning, behavior, or health difficulties.
2. The intervention and referral services action plan shall:
  - a. Detail any modifications in the student's educational program which will include, but not be limited to, support and guidance to the student's teacher(s);
  - b. List the persons who will implement the action plan;
  - c. Include any recommendations for assessment and referral to specified school or community-based social and/or health provider agencies;
  - d. Document parental notification of the student's referral and any change in educational placement or the withholding of parental notification because child abuse was suspected or Federal rules mandated confidentiality in an alcohol or drug related matter;
  - e. Involve the student's parent in the development and implementation of any intervention and referral services action plan by being offered an opportunity to provide input in the development and implementation of the action plan;



# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2417/page 4 of 5

Student Intervention and Referral Services

- f. Identify the I&RS Team member(s) who will coordinate the access to and delivery of school resources and services for achieving outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plan; and
  - g. Identify the I&RS Team member(s) who will coordinate the services of community-based social and health provider agencies and other community resources for achieving outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plan.
- 3. The implementation and effectiveness of each intervention and referral services action plan shall be reviewed by the I&RS Team within eight calendar weeks from the beginning of its implementation. The I&RS Team shall consult the referring school staff member and any other school staff members to assess the effectiveness of the plan.
  - a. If the action plan is not achieving the identified outcomes, the plan shall be modified to achieve the outcomes, as appropriate. If the review indicates the student may have a disability, the student shall be referred to the CST.
- 4. The I&RS Team may review any intervention and referral services action plan throughout the school year. However, at a minimum, the I&RS Team shall annually review all intervention and referral services action plans and the actions taken as a result of the school building's system of intervention and referral services, and make recommendations to the Principal for improving school programs and services, as appropriate.

## E. Annual Reports

- 1. At the end of the school year, the Principal shall, in consultation with the I&RS Team, develop a report on the concerns and issues identified by the I&RS Team and the effectiveness of the services provided in achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral services action plans. The report shall also include:





# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2417/page 5 of 5

Student Intervention and Referral Services

- a. A description of the needs and issues identified through referrals to the I&RS Team;
  - b. An identification and analysis of significant needs and issues that could facilitate school planning for the subsequent year;
  - c. A description of activities planned in response to the needs and issues significant in school planning; and
  - d. Any other information the Principal or the I&RS Team determine would be beneficial to improving the school's system for planning and delivering intervention and referral services designed to assist students.
2. The Principal's report shall be provided to the Superintendent of Schools.

Issued:



# POLICY

PROGRAM

2481/page 1 of 2

Home or Out-of-School Instruction for a General  
Education Student for Reasons Other Than a  
Temporary or Chronic Health Condition  
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## 2481 HOME OR OUT-OF-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION FOR A GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT FOR REASONS OTHER THAN A TEMPORARY OR CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION

The Board of Education shall provide instructional services to an enrolled general education student at the student's home or other suitable out-of-school setting under the following conditions:

- A. The student is mandated by State law and rule for placement in an alternative education program, but placement is not immediately available;
- B. The student is placed on short-term or long-term suspension from participation in the general education program; or
- C. A court order requires the student receive instructional services in the home or other out-of-school setting.

The school district in which a student resides shall be responsible for the costs of providing instruction in the home or out-of-school setting either directly, or through online services, including any needed equipment, or through contract with another Board of Education, Educational Services Commission, Jointure Commission, or approved clinic or agency. The district shall provide services no later than five school days after the student has left the general education program.

The services to be provided shall meet the minimum standards as required in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2(d).

The teacher(s) providing the instruction shall be a certified teacher. The teacher shall provide one-on-one instruction for no fewer than ten hours per week on three separate days of the week and no fewer than ten hours per week of additional guided-learning experiences that may include the use of technology to provide audio and visual connections to the student's classroom.



# POLICY

## PROGRAM

2481/page 2 of 2

Home or Out-of-School Instruction for a General  
Education Student for Reasons Other Than a  
Temporary or Chronic Health Condition

The instruction shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Board of Education's requirements for promotion and graduation.

If instruction is delivered in the student's home, a parent or other adult twenty-one years of age or older who has been designated by the parent shall be present during all periods of home instruction.

N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 through 18A:38-25  
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2

Adopted:



# REGULATION

## PROGRAM

R 2481/page 1 of 2

Home or Out-of-School Instruction for a General  
Education Student for Reasons Other Than a  
Temporary or Chronic Health Condition  
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### R 2481 HOME OR OUT-OF-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION FOR A GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT FOR REASONS OTHER THAN A TEMPORARY OR CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION

The Board of Education shall provide instructional services to an enrolled general education student at the student's home or other suitable out-of-school setting pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2.

#### A. Conditions For Providing Instructional Services – N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2(a)

1. The student is mandated by State law and rule for placement in an alternative education program, but placement is not immediately available;
2. The student is placed on short-term or long-term suspension from participation in the general education program; or
3. A court order requires the student to receive instructional services in the home or other out-of-school setting.

#### B. Providing Services

1. The school district shall provide services no later than five school days after the student has left the general education program.
2. The school district in which a student resides shall be responsible for the costs of providing instruction in the home or out-of-school setting either directly or through online services, including any needed equipment, or through contract with another Board of Education, Educational Services Commission, Jointure Commission, or approved clinic or agency.



# REGULATION

PROGRAM

R 2481/page 2 of 2

Home or Out-of-School Instruction for a General  
Education Student for Reasons Other Than a  
Temporary or Chronic Health Condition

C. Standards For Home or Out-of-School Instruction

1. The district shall establish a written plan for the delivery of instruction and maintain a record of delivery of instructional services and student progress.
2. The teacher providing instruction shall be a certified teacher.
3. The teacher shall provide one-on-one instruction for no fewer than ten hours per week on three separate days of the week and no fewer than ten hours per week of additional guided-learning experiences that may include the use of technology to provide audio and visual connections to the student's classroom.
4. The instruction shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Board of Education's requirements for promotion and graduation.

Issued:



# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 1 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

M

#### 3283 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS

The Board of Education recognizes electronic communications and the use of social media outlets create new options for extending and enhancing the educational program of the school district. Electronic communications and the use of social media can help students and teaching staff members communicate regarding: questions during non-school hours regarding homework or other assignments; scheduling issues for school-related co-curricular and interscholastic athletic activities; school work to be completed during a student's extended absence; distance learning opportunities; and other professional communications that can enhance teaching and learning opportunities between teaching staff members and students. However, the Board of Education recognizes teaching staff members can be vulnerable in electronic communications with students.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:36-40, the Board of Education adopts this Policy to provide guidance and direction to teaching staff members to prevent improper electronic communications between teaching staff members and students.

The Commissioner of Education and arbitrators, appointed by the Commissioner, have determined inappropriate conduct may determine a teaching staff member unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position. Improper electronic communications by teaching staff members may be determined to be inappropriate conduct.

For the purposes of this Policy, "electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. "Electronic communications" include, but are not limited to, e-mails, text messages, instant messages, and communications made by means of an Internet website, including social media and social networking websites.

For the purposes of this Policy, "professional responsibility" means a teaching staff member's responsibilities regarding co-curricular, athletic coaching, and any other instructional or non-instructional responsibilities assigned to the teaching staff member by the administration or Board of Education.



# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 2 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

For the purposes of this Policy, “improper electronic communications” means an electronic communication between a teaching staff member and any student of the school district when:

1. The content of the communication is inappropriate as defined in this Policy; and/or
2. The manner in which the electronic communication is made is not in accordance with acceptable protocols for electronic communications between a teaching staff member and a student as defined in this Policy.

Inappropriate content of an electronic communication between a teaching staff member and a student includes, but is not limited to:

1. Communications of a sexual nature, sexually oriented humor or language, sexual advances, or content with a sexual overtone;
2. Communications involving the use, encouraging the use, or promoting or advocating the use of alcohol or tobacco, the illegal use of prescription drugs or controlled dangerous substances, illegal gambling, or other illegal activities;
3. Communications regarding the teaching staff member’s or student’s past or current romantic relationships;
4. Communications which include the use of profanities, obscene language, lewd comments, or pornography;
5. Communications that are harassing, intimidating, or bullying;
6. Communications requesting or trying to establish a personal relationship with a student beyond the teaching staff member’s professional responsibilities;
7. Communications related to personal or confidential information regarding another school staff member or student; and



# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 3 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

8. Communications between the teaching staff member and a student that the Commissioner of Education or an arbitrator would determine to be inappropriate in determining the teaching staff member is unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position.

The following acceptable protocols for all electronic communications between a teaching staff member and a student shall be followed:

1. E-Mail Electronic Communications Between a Teaching Staff Member and a Student
  - a. All e-mails between a teaching staff member and a student must be sent or received through the school district's e-mail system. The content of all e-mails between a teaching staff member and a student shall be limited to the staff member's professional responsibilities regarding the student.
  - b. A teaching staff member shall not provide their personal e-mail address to any student. If a student sends an e-mail to a teaching staff member's personal e-mail address, the staff member shall respond to the e-mail through the school district e-mail system and inform the student his/her personal e-mail address shall not be used for any electronic communication between the teaching staff member and the student.
  - c. A teaching staff member's school district e-mail account is subject to review by authorized school district officials. Therefore, a teaching staff member shall have no expectation of privacy on the school district's e-mail system.
2. Cellular Telephone Electronic Communications Between a Teaching Staff Member and a Student
  - a. Communications between a teaching staff member and a student via a personal cellular telephone shall be prohibited.





# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 4 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

- (1) However, a teaching staff member may, with prior approval of the Principal or designee, communicate with a student using their personal cellular telephone if the need to communicate is directly related to the teaching staff member's professional responsibilities for a specific purpose such as a field trip, athletic event, co-curricular activity, etc. Any such approval for cellular telephone communications shall not extend beyond the specific field trip, athletic event, co-curricular activity, etc. approved by the Principal or designee.
3. Text Messaging Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students
  - a. Text messaging communications between a teaching staff member and an individual student are prohibited.
    - (1) However, a teaching staff member may, with prior approval of the Principal or designee, text message students provided the need to text message is directly related to the teaching staff member's professional responsibilities with a class or co-curricular activity. Any such text message must be sent to every student in the class or every member of the co-curricular activity. Any such approval for text messaging shall not extend beyond the class or activity approved by the Principal or designee.
4. Social Networking Websites and other Internet-Based Social Media Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and a Student
  - a. A teaching staff member is prohibited from communicating with any student through the teaching staff member's personal social networking website or other Internet-based website. Communications on personal websites are not acceptable between a teaching staff member and a student.



# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 5 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

- b. A teaching staff member shall not accept “friend” requests from any student on their personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website. Any communication sent by a student to a teaching staff member’s personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website shall not be responded to by the teaching staff member and shall be reported to the Principal or designee by the teaching staff member.
- c. If a teaching staff member has a student(s) as a “friend” on their personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website they must permanently remove them from their list of contacts upon Board adoption of this Policy.
- d. Communication between a teaching staff member and a student through social networking websites or other Internet-based social media websites is only permitted provided the website has been approved by the Principal or designee and all communications or publications using such websites are available to: every student in the class; every member of the co-curricular activity and their parents; and the Principal or designee.

#### Reporting Responsibilities

In the event a student sends an improper electronic communication, as defined in this Policy, to a teaching staff member, the teaching staff member shall report the improper communication to the Principal or designee by the next school day. The Principal or designee will take appropriate action to have the student discontinue such improper electronic communications. Improper electronic communications by a teaching staff member or a student may result in appropriate disciplinary action.



# POLICY

## TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

3283/page 6 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff Members and Students

A teaching staff member and student may be exempt from the provisions outlined in this Policy if a teaching staff member and student are relatives. The parent of a student and the teaching staff member requesting an exemption from the provisions of this Policy must submit a written request to the Principal of the student's school indicating the family relationship between the student and the teaching staff member. The Principal will provide written approval of the request to the teaching staff member and the student. If the Principal does not approve the request, the teaching staff member and the student must comply with all provisions of this Policy. The Principal's approval of a request for this exemption shall only be for the individual teaching staff member and student included in the request and for the school year in which the request is submitted.

The provisions of this Policy shall be applicable at all times while the teaching staff member is employed in the school district and at all times the student is enrolled in the school district, including holiday and summer breaks.

A copy of this Policy will be made available on an annual basis, to all parents, students, and school employees either electronically or in school handbooks.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-40

Adopted:



# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 1 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

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#### 4283 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS AND STUDENTS

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:36-40, the Board of Education adopts this Policy to provide guidance and direction to support staff members to prevent improper electronic communications between support staff members and students. The Board of Education recognizes support staff members can be vulnerable in electronic communications with students.

The Board prohibits all electronic communications between a support staff member and a student. However, based on a support staff member's professional responsibilities electronic communications between a support staff member and a student may be permitted with written approval of the Superintendent or designee. The approval is only for the school year in which the approval is granted. If the Superintendent or designee approves electronic communications between a support staff member and a student, the support staff member shall be required to comply with all the provisions of this Policy.

The Commissioner of Education has determined inappropriate conduct may determine a school staff member unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position. Improper electronic communications by school staff members may be determined to be inappropriate conduct.

For the purposes of this Policy, "electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. "Electronic communications" include, but are not limited to, e-mails, text messages, instant messages, and communications made by means of an Internet website, including social media and social networking websites.

For the purposes of this Policy, "professional responsibility" means a support staff member's responsibilities assigned to the support staff member by the administration or Board of Education.

For the purposes of this Policy, "improper electronic communications" means an electronic communication between a support staff member and any student of the school district when:



# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 2 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

1. The content of the communication is inappropriate as defined in this Policy; and/or
2. The manner in which the electronic communication is made is not in accordance with acceptable protocols for electronic communications between a support staff member and a student as defined in this Policy.

Inappropriate content of an electronic communication between a support staff member, who has been approved by the Superintendent or designee to have electronic communications, and a student includes, but is not limited to:

1. Communications of a sexual nature, sexually oriented humor or language, sexual advances, or content with a sexual overtone;
2. Communications involving the use, encouraging the use, or promoting or advocating the use of alcohol or tobacco, the illegal use of prescription drugs or controlled dangerous substances, illegal gambling, or other illegal activities;
3. Communications regarding the support staff member's or student's past or current romantic relationships;
4. Communications which include the use of profanities, obscene language, lewd comments, or pornography;
5. Communications that are harassing, intimidating, or bullying;
6. Communications requesting or trying to establish a personal relationship with a student beyond the support staff member's professional responsibilities;
7. Communications related to personal or confidential information regarding another school staff member or student; and
8. Communications between the support staff member and a student that the Commissioner of Education would determine to be inappropriate in determining the support staff member is unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position.



# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 3 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

The following acceptable protocols for all electronic communications between a support staff member, who has been approved by the Superintendent or designee to have electronic communications, and a student shall be followed:

1. E-Mail Electronic Communications Between a Support Staff Member and a Student
  - a. All e-mails between a support staff member and a student must be sent or received through the school district's e-mail system. The content of all e-mails between a support staff member and a student shall be limited to the staff member's professional responsibilities regarding the student.
  - b. A support staff member shall not provide their personal e-mail address to any student. If a student sends an e-mail to a support staff member's personal e-mail address, the staff member shall respond to the e-mail through the school district e-mail system and inform the student his/her personal e-mail address shall not be used for any electronic communication between the support staff member and the student.
  - c. A support staff member's school district e-mail account is subject to review by authorized school district officials. Therefore, a support staff member shall have no expectation of privacy on the school district's e-mail system.
1. Cellular Telephone Electronic Communications Between a Support Staff Member and a Student
  - a. Communications between a support staff member and a student via a personal cellular telephone shall be prohibited.
    - (1) However, a support staff member may, with prior approval of the Principal or designee, communicate with a student using their personal cellular telephone if the need to communicate is directly related to the support staff member's professional responsibilities for a specific purpose such as a field



# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 4 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

trip, athletic event, co-curricular activity, etc. Any such approval for cellular telephone communications shall not extend beyond the specific field trip, athletic event, co-curricular activity, etc. approved by the Principal or designee.

2. Text Messaging Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students
  - a. Text messaging communications between a support staff member and an individual student are prohibited.
    - (1) However, a support staff member may, with prior approval of the Principal or designee, text message students provided the need to text message is directly related to the support staff member's professional responsibilities regarding the student. Any such text message must be sent to every student in the class or every member of the co-curricular activity. Any such approval for text messaging shall not extend beyond the activity approved by the Principal or designee.
3. Social Networking Websites and other Internet-Based Social Media Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and a Student
  - a. A support staff member is prohibited from communicating with any student through the support staff member's personal social networking website or other Internet-based website. Communications on personal websites are not acceptable between a support staff member and a student.
  - b. A support staff member shall not accept "friend" requests from any student on their personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website. Any communication sent by a student to a support staff member's personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website shall not be responded to by the support staff member and shall be reported to the Principal or designee by the support staff member.





# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 5 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

- c. If a support staff member has a student(s) as a “friend” on their personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website they must permanently remove them from their list of contacts upon Board adoption of this Policy.
- d. Communication between a support staff member and a student through social networking websites or other Internet-based social media websites is only permitted provided the website has been approved by the Principal or designee and all communications or publications using such websites are available to: every student in the class; every member of the co-curricular activity and their parents; and the Principal or designee.

#### Reporting Responsibilities

- 1. In the event a student sends an electronic communication to a support staff member who has not been approved by the Superintendent or designee to have electronic communications, the support staff member shall report the communication to the Principal or designee. The Principal or designee will take appropriate action to have the student discontinue such electronic communications. Electronic communications by a support staff member or a student where such communications are not approved by the Superintendent or designee may result in appropriate disciplinary action.
- 2. In the event a student sends an improper electronic communication, as defined in this Policy, to a support staff member who has been approved by the Superintendent or designee to receive electronic communications, the support staff member shall report the improper electronic communication to the Principal or designee. The Principal or designee will take appropriate action to have the student discontinue such improper electronic communications. Improper electronic communications by a support staff member or a student may result in appropriate disciplinary action.





# POLICY

## SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

4283/page 6 of 6

### Electronic Communications Between Support Staff Members and Students

A support staff member and student may be exempt from the provisions outlined in this Policy if a support staff member and student are relatives. The parent of the student and the support staff member requesting an exemption from the provisions of this Policy must submit a written request to the Principal of the student's school indicating the family relationship between the student and the support staff member. The Principal will provide written approval of the request to the support staff member and the student. If the Principal does not approve the request, the support staff member and the student must comply with all provisions of this Policy. The Principal's approval of a request for this exemption shall only be for the individual support staff member and student included in the request and for the school year in which the request is submitted.

The provisions of this Policy shall be applicable at all times while the support staff member is employed in the school district and at all times the student is enrolled in the school district, including holiday and summer breaks.

A copy of this Policy will be made available on an annual basis, to all parents, students, and school employees either electronically or in school handbooks.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-40

Adopted:

