



# Weslaco Independent School District

## Human Resources Department

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### **-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FROM LEGAL COUNSEL (Jan 19, 2016)-**

TOPIC: \*New Texting & Electronic Use of Media Changes

1. **ONLY CERTIFIED OR LICENSED EMPLOYEES, OR THOSE DESIGNATED IN WRITING BY A SUPERINTENDENT OR CAMPUS PRINCIPAL, MAY COMMUNICATE THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEDIA WITH STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE DISTRICT. ALL OTHERS ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.**

a. Electronic media is defined on the attachments, but includes any contact by phone (texting) & all forms of online communication (email, social media, etc.).

b. No texting or communication via social media, unless you are certified/licensed/designated in writing

i. Even if allowed, you are subject to restrictions on your communication: (1) you are restricted to communicate only with the students who are in your class/extracurricular activity; (2) content must be relevant to your professional relationship; (3) time must be between 6:01 AM – 9:59 PM; (4) no privacy on these conversations, must cc a parent, your supervisor or your email.

c. You may not communicate with other students who are not in your class/activity without written consent from the parent/guardian (see #2 below)

2. **THERE IS NO EXCEPTION FOR TEXTING FAMILY OR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS UNLESS IT IS IN WRITING (see attached) TO YOUR SUPERVISOR (meaning your campus principal/designee) AND IS SIGNED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD FOR WHOM YOU ARE CLAIMING THE EXCEPTION.**

a. This means you cannot text your niece/nephew without written consent from parent with copy to District

b. This means you cannot text your child's friend to look for your child, without written consent from parent which is submitted to the school

c. This means you cannot communicate with past students who are still enrolled at the District without parental consent.

3. **WHEN YOU** (Certified/licensed/those with written permission) **DO TEXT OR COMMUNICATE WITH STUDENTS BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, YOU MUST CC A PARENT, YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR** (to be figured out at the campus level by your principal), **OR YOUR OWN SCHOOL EMAIL ACCOUNT**. Moreover, all content is restricted to professional communication between the hours of 6:01 AM and 9:59 PM.

a. This includes **any** group text messages - you must **STILL** cc a parent/supervisor or your school email account

b. **Remind 101** - Remind 101 is a private texting program and not a District Program. If you continue to use Remind 101, you must abide by the requirement of cc'ing a parent, supervisor or your District email on each text/communication sent.

c. If you are using District authorized programs for texting/communicating with students, you do not have to cc a parent, supervisor or your email account, as copies of the communications are retained through the program itself.

**Failing to follow these new texting and electronic media rules could result in write-ups to personnel file, could affect end of year evaluations, and could result in termination or nonrenewal.**

For further questions, all personnel should see Human Resources ("HR"), and **HR** will contact legal counsel for additional guidance, as needed.