

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Northampton School Committee believes educators should model professional, appropriate, and respectful digital communication skills. The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually educate staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. All employees must conduct themselves in ways that promote the educational process and create safe, respectful, and professional relationship boundaries. The training will give special emphasis to:

1. Expectations concerning the demonstration of sound judgment reflecting integrity, honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness and the protection of student confidentiality.
2. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and similar internet sites or social media, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.
 - a. Employees will protect student confidentiality by not listing current students as “friends” on networking sites, with the exception of family members.
 - b. All e-contacts with students should be through the district’s computer, email, and telephone systems, except in unforeseen or emergency situations.
 - c. All staff websites must comply with School Committee Policy IJNDC.
 - d. All contact and messages by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members, except where a procedure has otherwise been established. Messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters will be copied to the athletic director and the school principal.
 - e. Employees will not provide students with their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
 - f. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited.
3. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.
4. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol.
5. Examples of inappropriate behavior to avoid.
6. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology.
7. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for inappropriate behavior or failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

Policy: IJNDD

The Superintendent has the authority to periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Adoption date: June 11, 2015

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