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# Weslaco Independent School District

## Human Resources Department

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P.O. Box 266  
Weslaco, TX 78599-0266



*Dr. Priscilla Canales,  
Superintendent of Schools*

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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. We strongly urge you to use 956Insider, instead. 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. **956 Insider** – If you are using District authorized programs for texting students, such as 956 Insider, 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.



# WESLACO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Dr. Priscilla Canales Superintendent of Schools*

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## USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA WITH STUDENTS: FAMILY OR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP EXCEPTION PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (“Parent/Guardian”) in my  
authority as the Parent/Guardian of  
\_\_\_\_\_ (“Student”), hereby authorize  
\_\_\_\_\_ (“Employee”) to communicate  
with Student by use of electronic media under the social or family relationship exception  
of the Weslaco Independent School District (“District”) Employee Handbook.

\*For purposes of this document, I understand that electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs) wikis, electronic forums, (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic Media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones and Web-based applications.

I, the Parent/Guardian acknowledge, by way of this written document, that the Employee has provided me with a copy of the District’s protocol. I further acknowledge that the Employee and the Student have a social or family relationship outside of school. I understand that the Employee’s communications with the Student are excepted from District regulation, and that I, as the Parent/Guardian, am solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the Employee and the Student.

Description of the Family/Social Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

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I submit this form under a **family exception** and it is to be valid for the following academic years: 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_\_.

**All social relationship exceptions are only valid for one academic school year and must be renewed at the annually.**

**Acknowledged on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Parent/Guardian:**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee:**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_