

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES**

The Auburn Public Schools believes in the power of technology and the potential benefit it can bring to the classroom and the educational process. As with any tool, however, it must be used appropriately.

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining professional boundaries in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that enhance the mission of the Auburn Public Schools and that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process.

The Auburn Public Schools encourages staff to communicate with students via the district's computer and telephone system, except in emergency situations.

The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- 1) improper fraternization with students using personal Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone;
  - a. Teachers may not list current students as "friends" on networking sites.
  - b. All e-contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
  - c. All contact and messages by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the athletic director and the school principal.
  - d. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
  - e. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited.
- 2) inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
- 3) inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
- 4) examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
- 5) monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
- 6) the possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

If 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.

**REF.:** Mass. Association of School Committees

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***Auburn Public Schools***