



## John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center

*It all starts here!*

**Dr. Cayce J. Cummins, Principal**

123 Cleveland Street

Orange, NJ 07050

973-677-4000 ext. 51700

[www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us)

# Preschool Family Handbook 2022-2023



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## School Matters!



Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers,

We are thrilled for the start of the 2022-2023 school year at the John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center (JRLECC)! The JRLECC staff is ready to continue developing our young learners and get started with our new learners. This handbook is full of information about our school and preschool program. The information will be shared and reviewed at our **Back to School Night** on **Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>** from **6:00- 8:00 p.m.**

See you then!

Your Partner in Education,

*Cayce J. Cummins*

Cayce J. Cummins, E.D.

Principal

## **The Orange Board of Education Vision and Mission Statement**

### Vision

"The Orange Public School District commits to provide a safe and caring environment where each student is expected to grow and succeed. We pledge to prepare all students with equitable opportunities for college and career readiness, leading to lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in a competitive global community."

### Mission

- The Orange Public School District in collaboration with all stakeholders is responsible for promoting the academic, social, emotional and personal success of all students.
- With a commitment to academic excellence, the district provides teachers, families, and administrators the tools needed for all students to reach their full potential.
- The district serves all students in our schools, acknowledging their unique backgrounds, cultural perspectives and learning styles.
- The district recognizes that curiosity, discipline, integrity, responsibility and respect are necessary for success.
- The Orange Public School District cultivates a community of 21st century learners where students take ownership of the learning process, achieve high standards of excellence, and focus on academics.



## **John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center (JRLECC) Vision and Mission Statement**

### **Vision Statement**

The vision of the John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center (JRLECC) is to develop superstar scholars who are kind, respectful, self-assured, and lifelong learners. Our scholars will have the skills needed to be confident in their abilities to work towards equitable opportunities for all. It all starts here!

### **JRLECC Mission Statement**

The Mission of the JRLECC is to develop the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of young children. Our goal is to maximize growth through the implementation of a high-quality research-based curriculum and the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. Through supportive and nurturing relationships, and a caring and safe learning environment our scholars will thrive in reaching their individual milestones. Through play, they will engage in developmentally appropriate and rigorous academic challenges. Our teachers will provide quality experiences, and inclusive practices while supporting social skills that will prepare our scholars for a life of success. We are intentional about celebrating diversity and cultures of our scholars by ensuring culturally responsive practices and by partnering with our families and community to

### PROGRAM DESIGN

The State of New Jersey mandates full day/full year education for all three and four-year-old children in specific school districts. The Orange Township Public Schools offers a **FREE** six-hour educational program in our district's public schools as well as the neighborhood childcare facilities. Before and aftercare services are available as well, however, there may be associated costs, please see page (Before & Aftercare) for additional information. This mixed delivery system allows families greater flexibility in choosing the school/center that works best for the family. However, placement at the schools/centers is on a first come first basis. Every effort is made to place your child at your school of choice. If there is no space at the school of your choice at the time of registration, we will work diligently to place your child at a school/center of your second choice. Your child will then be placed on a transfer waiting list for the first-choice school, and you will be notified as to when space becomes available.

- Transportation – There is no transportation provided; however, preschoolers identified as preschool disabled are eligible for transportation services provided by the district's Department of Special Services.
- Potty Training – Your child does not need to be potty trained to begin school. Teachers will work with families to assist with this process. If your child is not yet potty trained, you must always provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing. You must also provide the diapers and wipes needed.
- Uniforms – They are optional in district preschool classrooms. Some of our private providers do require uniforms. If your child attends a site that requires uniforms, you will receive information about what your child should wear to school from the Director. Please see pages for additional information regarding clothing.

### SUPPORT STAFF

Besides the instructional staff, the preschool department has support staff to assist with the implementation of the program. The support staff includes:

The John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center Principal - Responsible for the administrative oversight of the preschool program including overseeing the preschool budget, five-year preschool program plan, the implementation of the comprehensive curriculum and appropriate early childhood practices, registration, recruitment, professional development, contract compliance with preschool providers, transition, communicating with school district and special services, etc.

Fiscal Specialist – Responsible for monitoring each contracting private provider and/or Head Start agency for compliance with the preschool program contract; track and report teacher certification information; monitor expenses and review quarterly expenditure reports and provides financial management assistance to contracting private providers and Head Start in developing and monitoring their annual budgets.

## **SCHEDULING and HOURS OF OPERATION**

· Students must arrive to school by 8:30 a.m. Dismissal is at 3:00 p.m.

### **Drop off and Pick Up of Students**

Staff members will be located at their assigned post /door in the morning and afternoon where they will have a parent, guardian or caregiver sign their child(ren) in and out.

Without exception, children will only be released to parents and authorized individuals whom the parents have included on their emergency pick up cards. Parents must include the full names of **all** individuals that will be allowed to pick up their child on the emergency card. For security precautions, phone calls will not be accepted from parents informing us that someone that is not on the emergency card will be picking up the child. All individuals picking up children must have a picture ID available to show the security guard. The name on the emergency card must match the name of the ID. Please note that we are also not to release a child for pick up to anyone less than 12 years of age.

### **MORNING ENTRANCE PROCEDURES**



#### **8:30 a.m.**

- Students must arrive to school by 8:30. We need our students on time and present every day.
- Parents/caregivers should bring their children to meet their teacher(s) at their assigned door, where they will sign them in (See below).
- If there is inclement weather, students will be escorted inside the building to their classrooms by a staff member after being signed in by the parent/caregiver.
- Breakfast will be served and eaten in the classroom when children arrive.
  - *Door #1 (Main entrance door in the parking lot on White Street)*  
Classrooms 100 and 106
  - *Door #2 (Cleveland Street)*  
Classrooms 101 and 102
  - *Door #3 (Cleveland Street)*  
Classrooms 104 and 105

### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

#### **3:00 P.M.**



- All students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. They will be dismissed from the same door where they entered in the morning. Students who are picked up early or late will exit from the main door in the parking lot after being signed out.
- If you are unable to pick up your child on a certain day, please provide prompt written notification to the main office. Include the name of the person who will be picking them up and include their phone number. This person will need to show identification before signing the child out for dismissal.

## BEFORE AND AFTERCARE

Norjene's Day Care Center offers before and aftercare services for in-district preschoolers only. Before and aftercare hours are 7:30 am. to 8:15 am. and 3:00 pm. to 5:30 pm. and childcare vouchers are accepted.

### Contact Information:

Norma Adams, Executive Director  
95 South Essex Avenue, Orange, NJ 07050  
973-677-4299

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### NURSES

The Orange Board of Education employs full-time nurses to care for the needs of the students' immediate health concerns. The school nurses are responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date health records including immunizations, physical and emergency information on every student. In addition, the nurses are responsible for taking the height and weight of the students as well as the following screenings: hearing, vision, blood pressure and dental. The nurses will also demonstrate proper handwashing and toothbrushing techniques as well.

JRLECC's School Nurse  
(973) 677-4000 ext.51750

### IMMUNIZATIONS & ANNUAL PHYSICALS

It is mandated by the State of New Jersey that the school have complete immunizations on record for every student in preschool. The nurses will do an immunization review upon registration and early in the school year to ensure our records are up to date. If your child requires further immunizations, the nurses will send a letter home with the specific vaccines needed. If your child is not current with his/her immunizations, the school may be forced to exclude your child from school until he/she is current. Students must also have a **Universal Child Health Record** filled out by a pediatrician, which is based on their annual physical examination.

As of September 2008, the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services has mandated additional vaccines for children in preschool:

- Influenza Vaccine: this is for children 6-59 months attending any child-care center or preschool facility on or after September 1, 2008. They must receive at least one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.
- Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV): every child 12-59 months (about 5 years) of age attending a childcare center on or after September 1, 2008, must receive at least one dose of PCV on or after their first birthday.



## ILLNESS & EXCLUSION

Should your child become ill, please take precautions to ensure that we do not spread the illness to others in the school/center. Once your child is symptom-free, or has a doctor's note stating the diagnosis, length of recovery time and the date, the child may return to school.

Children who have been diagnosed with the following or have related symptoms prior to a diagnosis may not come to school:

- A runny nose with a discharge that is green, the child should be taken to the doctor to rule out infection.
- Ringworm, which is a fungus causing a small, round, itchy, red, flaky patch that is highly contagious. If the doctor diagnoses your child with a ringworm, he/she may return to school with the appropriate doctor's note 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Lice which are also very contagious, they are small insects that attach eggs called nits to the hair shaft. Students will be excluded till they have treatment examined before returning to class and parents should bring in the empty box of medicated shampoo used for lice treatment to show school nurse/teacher.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): If a child is diagnosed by the doctor with pink eye, they must remain home for 24 hours after the first treatment of antibiotic eye drops so they are no longer contagious.
- Bed Bugs: If your child has many bedbug bites on their arms and legs, the school nurse will call to see if there is a known problem at home and will help by calling our district exterminator to test the classroom as well as the home. The exterminator along with the Department of Health can then help notify the landlord of necessary treatments.
- Chicken Pox
- Whooping Cough
- Measles
- Scabies
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Scarlet Fever
- Diarrhea: more than 2 loose stools, the child will be sent home and cannot return for 24 hrs.
- Vomiting: Child will be sent home and must remain home for 24 hours after vomiting stops.
- Fever over 100 degrees: child will be sent home and must remain home until they are fever-free without medication for 24 hours.

## **ADMISSION/EXCLUSION DUE TO SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS (COVID-19 Precautions)**

Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our school. If families have any doubts about their child's health, they must call 973-677-4000 ext. 1906 to speak with the school nurse. If children appear to be sick or has any of the above symptoms while at school, the school nurse will notify the family immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification.

The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication. Children must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning. In the event that a child is sent home with one of the above health concerns, he/she will not be permitted back to school without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.

Permission for a child to be administered medicine in the school must be approved by the physician and completing a medication form. Medications for maintenance will be administered throughout the day as required. The medication must be given to the school nurse in its original bottle, which contains the pharmacist's directions. The medication log must be signed by the parent at this time and will be kept on file. Children will be given their medication according to the prescription specifications only.

If a child is showing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) OR if a family member was in close contact with someone testing positive for COVID-19, we will ask the family to keep the child home for a minimum of 14 days.

We ask that all family members and staff inform us of any potential exposure immediately. A potential exposure means being in close contact (within 6 feet) of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes. The time-frame for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours (about 2 days) before the individual becomes symptomatic. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Superintendent and follow district process and procedures while informing our parents.

We will safely and respectfully isolate children who show symptoms related to COVID-19 in our established isolated space (near the nurse's office). Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.

## **HYGIENE MEASURES AND PROCEDURES**

There will be signs for social distancing and proper hand washing throughout the building.

The John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center (JRLECC) staff will routinely clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces (e.g. keyboards, tables, etc.) before/after use (in the classrooms and offices). Cleaning procedures include two stages: cleaning, which removes dirt and germs from surfaces, and disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning.

## **SCHOOL CLEANING PRACTICES**

Our school will adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. JRLECC has a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:

- Classroom desks and chairs
- Classroom sink handles
- Counter tops
- Lunchroom tables and chairs
- Door handles and push plates
- Handrails
- Kitchens and bathrooms
- Light switches

Regarding bathrooms:

- Crowds avoided in the bathrooms by limiting the number of students who can enter at a time.
- JRLECC has a process and schedule for the routine cleaning and disinfecting of furniture.
- Classrooms have EPA-registered disposable wipes for teachers and staff to wipe down commonly used surfaces before use (e.g. keyboards, tables, etc.)

## **SCHOOL PANDEMIC RESPONSE/SAFETY TEAM**

Cayce J. Cummins, Ed.D., Principal

Wendyann Edwards, PreK Teacher

Terry Everett, Security Guard

Margarita Gomez, PreK Paraprofessional

Lorelly Hernandez, Custodian

Rayza Merino, Building Based Sub

Lisa Quiles, Administrative Assistant

School Nurse

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Mandated Reporting – As professionals in contact with young children and their families, we are required by law to report children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance, or family counselors; as well as day care/childcare workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is our policy to report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone.

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## **GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

One of our goals is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors guides the staff in their interactions with children. The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in our schools/centers.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted on or near school grounds. and cell phones cannot be used while in schools and classrooms.

## CLASSROOM INFORMATION

### INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

All preschool teachers are NJ Licensed Teachers holding a bachelor's degree and a NJ Preschool-Grade 3 Teacher's Certificate. Relief Teachers hold the same credentials as the teachers. They travel from classroom to classroom throughout the school day and cover the classrooms when the teachers are on their planning time which occurs each day for 45 minutes. Relief teachers assume all responsibilities as a teacher when she/he is in the classroom.

All preschool paraprofessionals must have at least 48 college credits or have passed the NJ Paraprofessional Exam.

### INCLUSION

Inclusive education teaches all children teamwork and how to relate and function together with others with different abilities. Students learn to value diversity, see the ability of others to contribute, and inclusion also gives children a sense of unity. Preschool Inclusion teachers work in the classroom to provide special education services to children with disabilities. They collaborate with and provide strategies to the regular education teachers to ensure the children's individual goals are being met. They provide extra support and change the curriculum for children with disabilities to function in a general education setting. The Inclusive Teaching Model is where the Early Childhood teacher implements classroom activities and lesson plans from the district curriculum and plans with the inclusion teacher for adaptations and modifications for children with special needs. All related services such as Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy or Physical Therapy are strongly encouraged to occur in the child's classroom. *Ms. Mindy Sauchelli is the inclusion Teacher for JRLECC.*

The Pyramid Model - The Pyramid Model builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them.

#### Tiers of the Pyramid Model

- Tier 1: Universal Promotion – strategies are used for all children
- Tier 2: Secondary Prevention practices that are targeted social and emotional strategy to prevent problems
- Tier 3: Tertiary intervention comprised of practices related to individualized intensive interventions

SEL will be integrated into our delivery of instruction daily and throughout the school year. To help children problem solve, teachers will use solution cards, social stories, books, the High Scope conflict resolution steps, and Tucker Turtle.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The Child Observation Record (COR) is the performance-based assessment model for all district and community preschool classrooms. The COR assesses early young children in eight content areas:

- Approaches to learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development and Health
- Language, Literacy, and Communication
- Mathematics
- Creative Arts
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- English Language Learning (appropriate for children whose first language is not English)

The teaching staff spend a few minutes each day writing brief notes that describe what children say do and how they behave in various situations. The COR is completed during everyday activities and is a true reflection on what the children can do. Therefore, the assessment is seamlessly integrated with teaching and planning. Teachers compile and analyze the notes to provide a comprehensive portrait of each child's developmental gains as well as the progress of the group. The information gained will assist teachers with planning appropriate activities/lessons for the children. Child progress is shared with parents twice per year (usually in November and April).

## **CLOTHING**

Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing, and other vigorous activity, and that is appropriate for the weather. Because the children work with paint, clay and other fun materials, they should wear clothes that can be laundered easily.

- For the safety of all our students, we ask that children wear sneakers or other rubber soled shoes. Flip-flops, sandals, and dress shoes are dangerous for running, jumping, and climbing.
- A complete change of clothes is essential. Please label all clothing with your child's name. The extra set of clothing will be stored in your child's backpack and will be sent home each day with your child. It is not unusual for preschoolers to occasionally soil their clothing due to illness or accident. Please check your child's backpack daily just in case he/she has an accident. All clothing must be labeled. If your child is not yet toilet trained, you must always provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing. You must also provide the diapers/pull-ups and wipes.
- One of the most important skills preschoolers learn is to manage their own clothing. Please try to dress your child in clothing he can manage on his own. Please label your child's jackets and coats with his or her first and last name. Sometimes items look very similar, and it is difficult for a child to distinguish his or her coat from that of a classmate.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

We ask that our Preschoolers please do not bring toys from home into the classroom. While we understand that young children often are excited to bring in special toys from home, we do not want their precious treasures to be misplaced or accidentally broken. Each classroom is full of toys and materials for our children to use daily. If, by chance, a child does bring a home toy to school, she/he will be asked to keep it safely in their cubby until the end of the day.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

The celebration of birthdays and other special events will be celebrated in developmentally appropriate ways for preschoolers. It is important to consider the many different perspectives on holidays and what they mean to the communities, families, and children that we serve in our schools. Guided by the NJ Preschool food/snacks are allowed. Teachers have knowledge of children's' food allergies and will inform parents of which foods cannot be shared with the class.

- Birthdays - School birthday celebrations can be fun, academic, and still leave children beaming with birthday delight! Parents should check with the teacher to create a celebration that fits in with the school day while making the child feel special. Families may wish to bring or send food/snacks for the class. Only store-bought prepackaged food/snacks are allowed. Teachers have knowledge of children's' food allergies and will inform parents of which foods cannot be shared with the class.
- End of Year - Our end of the year celebrations are meaningful times for our children and families. It is important to celebrate children's' accomplishments. This time also brings closure to our children's' time together as some will be moving up to kindergarten.

Please check with your child's teachers for other types of celebrations that may occur in your child's classroom throughout the school year. Also make them aware of holidays or celebrations that your family recognizes.

## **FAMILY VOLUNTEERS**

Because of the health and safety concerns posed by the current pandemic, volunteering in the school or classroom is prohibited. However, there are other ways to volunteer. Volunteering is a wonderful way to model positive social interactions and to demonstrate a genuine interest in your child's education. Volunteering opportunities include but are not limited to:

- assisting with activities/lessons at home
- reading stories virtually to class
- sharing your favorite family snacks virtually
- collecting materials and supplies for your child to use at home such as, acorns, tops, leaves, dress-up clothes, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
- attending or planning parent workshops
- participating in various school committees.

Please check with your child's teacher and sign up to become a volunteer.

## **COMPLETING AND RETURNING FORMS**

Throughout the school year there will be forms sent home for you to complete and return to school. It is important for you to complete the forms and send them back. Some of the forms that you will complete are as follows: Family update (this is sent home twice per year), Community Needs Assessment, Mid-Year and End of the Year Parent Surveys, Kindergarten Transition Survey, health screening follow-up forms, etc. Completing and returning forms is a form of volunteering; however, the information on the forms allows us to assess the delivery of services that we provide as well as maintaining a quality preschool program. To reduce the number of forms that are exchanged, JRLECC will use technology, whenever possible for families to complete and return forms.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) was established to give all those who are interested in the educational success of the children in the Orange Township Public Schools an avenue to learn and share information and experiences that are beneficial to the children. The council is composed of school personnel, families, and community stakeholders. The council meets to discuss the needs of the program, challenges, and successes of our preschool children. We encourage our families who want to have their voices heard to inform your child's teacher or social worker that you are interested in participating in the council.

## **PREK-3 TRANSITION COMMITTEE**

The formation of the preschool-kindergarten transition committee came because of the Early Childhood Program and the district's elementary schools recognizing the importance of providing our preschoolers entering kindergarten with a seamless transition. This committee is composed of representatives of all the elementary schools, staff from the Early Childhood department, community stakeholders and parents. The events that will be planned will enhance communication among all grade levels. The goal will be to strengthen the connection between home, school, and the community. If you are interested in participating in this committee, please speak with your child's teacher or the school's social worker.



# APPENDIX

Orange Board of Education P3283

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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.

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
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 email account is subject to review by authorized school district officials. Therefore, a teaching staff member shall have no exception of privacy on the school district's email 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.

Optional: District may select one of the following exemption options:

- 1) 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.

- 2 ) 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 teaching staff member and the student's parent shall submit notification to the Principal of the student's school of their family relationship and their exemption from the provisions outlined in this Policy.

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: