

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

HOUSE BILL 3958

By: Conley

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to student communication; defining terms; requiring certain communication with student to include student's parent or guardian; providing an exception for emergencies; requiring reasonable efforts to use certain school-approved communications; mandating training for school personnel; directing State Department of Education to develop training; providing for investigation of reported violations; prescribing punishment if misconduct is found; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 6-401 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. As used in this section:

1. "Electronic or digital communication" includes, but is not limited to, emails, text messages, instant messages, direct messages, social media messages, messages sent through software

1 applications, and any other electronic digital means of
2 communication; and

3 2. "School personnel" means teachers, coaches, administrators,
4 school bus drivers, or any other persons employed full-time or part-
5 time by a public school or charter school.

6 B. School personnel engaging in electronic or digital
7 communication with a student shall include the student's parent or
8 guardian in any electronic or digital communication.

9 C. Exceptions to the requirement in subsection B of this
10 section may be made in case of an emergency, subject to subsequent
11 notification to the parent or guardian. School personnel shall make
12 reasonable efforts to use school-approved platforms, systems, or
13 applications that allow automatic inclusion of parents or guardians
14 in communications with students.

15 D. Schools shall provide training, developed by the State
16 Department of Education, for school personnel on the student
17 communication requirements of this section.

18 E. Any school personnel who is reported to be in violation of
19 subsection B of this section shall be put on administrative leave
20 while the school district investigates the incident and notifies the
21 board of education. If the investigation finds that no misconduct
22 occurred, the school personnel shall be reinstated and a written
23 warning of the incident shall be included in the school personnel's
24 employee file. If the investigation finds misconduct occurred, the
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1 school personnel's employment shall be terminated, and the incident
2 shall be reported to law enforcement pursuant to Section 1210.163 of
3 Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

4 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2024.

5 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
6 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
7 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
8 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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