

# Bolton Public Schools

## Guidelines for Employee Communication

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*Guidelines for communication by employees of the Bolton Public Schools using social and educational networking sites, e-mail, and personal cell phones*

### **1. Guidelines for the use of social networking sites by all employees of the Bolton Public Schools:**

*Social networks are rapidly growing in popularity and used by all ages in society. The most popular social networks are web-based, commercial, and not purposely designed for educational use. For individuals, social networking sites provide tremendous opportunities for staying in touch with friends and family.*

- Do not accept currently enrolled students as friends on personal social networking sites. Decline any currently enrolled student-initiated friend requests. Do not initiate friendships with currently enrolled students on social networking sites. Remember that people classified as “friends” have the ability to download and share your information with others.
- When posting items or photos to personal social networking sites do not include sexual content or items that exhibit or advocate the use of drugs or alcohol. Exercise good judgment in all online activities.
- Do not discuss students, policies, or school personnel on personal social networking sites.
- Inappropriate contact with currently enrolled students via social networking sites is prohibited.

### **2. Guidelines for the use of educational networking sites by all employees of the Bolton Public Schools:**

*Educational networking sites are also growing in use. These sites are used by educators for both professional development and as a teaching tool, and are usually restricted to selected users and not available to the general public.*

*The district does recognize the value of student/teacher interaction on educational networking sites. Collaboration, resource sharing, and student/teacher and student/student dialog can all be facilitated by the judicious use of educational networking tools. Such interactivity is a critical component of any online class and can greatly enhance face-to-face classes.*

- Let your administrator, fellow teachers, and parents know about your educational network.
- Have a clear statement of purpose and outcomes for the use of the networking tool.
- Establish a code of conduct for all network participants.
- Do not post images that include students without parental release forms on file.
- Pay close attention to the site's security settings and allow only approved participants access to the site.
- If a staff member learns of information on the educational networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines, he or she must report it as required by law.
- Inappropriate contact with currently enrolled students via educational networking sites is prohibited.

**3. Guidelines for the use of e-mail by all employees of the Bolton Public Schools:**

- E-mail contact with currently enrolled students should be through the District’s computer system.
- E-mail contact with parents/guardians/families should be through the District’s computer system.
- Currently enrolled students should not be contacted using personal e-mail accounts in non-emergency situations.
- Inappropriate contact with currently enrolled students via e-mail is prohibited.

**4. Guidelines for the use of personal cell phones by all employees of the Bolton Public Schools:**

- Employees should not make personal calls while monitoring students.
- Employees should not text while monitoring students.
- Employees should refrain from any use of personal cell phones in the presence of students.
- Employees should notify administrators if emergency personal cell phone use is or may be necessary.
- Currently enrolled students should only be contacted using personal cell phones (voice or text) for school-related communications.
- Inappropriate contact with currently enrolled students via personal cell phone (voice or text) is prohibited.

The personal life of an employee, including the employee’s personal use of non-District issued electronic equipment outside of working hours (such as through social networking sites and personal portrayal on the Internet) will be the concern of and warrant the attention of the Board if it impairs the employee’s ability to effectively perform his/her job responsibilities or if it violates local, State, or federal law or contractual agreements. Unprofessional conduct may subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with State law, federal law, and/or Board policy.