

An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 3958

By: Conley, Banning, Fugate,
and Davis of the House

and

Pugh of the Senate

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.

SUBJECT: Student communication

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

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

B. School personnel engaging in electronic or digital communication with an individual student shall include the student's parent or guardian in any electronic or digital communication, unless such communication is on a school-approved platform and related to school and academic communications.

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

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

E. Any school personnel who is reported to be in violation of subsection B of this section shall be put on administrative leave while the school district investigates the incident and notifies the board of education. If the investigation finds that no misconduct occurred, the school personnel shall be reinstated and the incident shall be noted in the school personnel's employee file. If the investigation finds misconduct occurred, the school personnel shall be disciplined according to the school district board of education's policy, up to and including termination of employment, and the incident shall be reported to law enforcement pursuant to Section 1210.163 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

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

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

Passed the House of Representatives the 7th day of May, 2024.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 25th day of April, 2024.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____