



ROSENSTEIN, FIST & RINGOLD

RED BANNER UPDATE

Date: May 14, 2024

Re: HB 3958

Signed: May 13, 2024

Effective: July 1, 2024

Topic: Electronic/Digital Communications with Students

Summary: This bill creates a new law (70 O.S. § 6-401) requiring teachers, coaches, administrators, school bus drivers, or any other persons employed full-time or part-time by a public school or charter school (“school personnel”) who are engaging in electronic or digital communication with a student to include the student's parent or guardian in the communication, unless the communication is on a school-approved platform and is related to school and academic communications. Excepted are emergency situations where the parent or guardian is subsequently notified.

The law specifies that 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.

Districts are required to provide training developed by the OSDE on the requirements of this new law.

Any school personnel who is reported to be in violation of the new requirement on including parents/guardians in the communications, shall be placed on administrative leave while the 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's policy, up to and including termination of employment, and the incident shall be reported to law enforcement.



Legal counsel at the firm is currently reviewing this legislation and will be advising clients as to any recommended changes to existing district policies.