

Ms. Ana Rivas Logan, School Board Member

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REVIEW AND REVISE SCHOOL BOARD RULE 6Gx13-6A-1.112

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

As the use of “blogs” and networking sites continues to increase, so does the risk that employees may post inappropriate information online and the school board should be aware of the potential negative effect public postings might have on the district. Many school districts have disciplined or even terminated employees for posting unauthorized images depicting questionable behavior or caustic comments concerning the workplace, colleagues or school administrators.

It is clear that employees of the Miami-Dade County Public School system have the freedom to express themselves on blogs and networking sites, however unlike private sector employees, educators are role models for the children they educate. Parents entrust educators to impart basic societal values and qualities of good citizenship with their children.

While educators are free to express themselves as citizens, the school district must retain the flexibility to discipline educators for publicly posting offensive, inappropriate or even questionable material online that significantly disrupts our educational goals and mission.

The school board will need to confront these questions, and more, in order to identify potential liability when disciplining an employee for online behavior should the situation arise.

By further developing the school board’s policy on blogs, found in School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.112, it can lessen the possibility for potential confrontation in the future and set reasonable expectations regarding the online activities of staff.

The National School Board Association has made several recommendations regarding school board policies and procedures in reference to blogs and networking sites:

- Encourage bloggers to take responsibility for their posts and public accountability.
- Prohibit the use of school mascots, symbols, logos or other district trademarks.
- Prohibit blogging during the school day.
- Prohibit the use of school district property for personal blogs.
- Require the use of a disclaimer regarding the statements posted on the blog.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. ANA RIVAS LOGAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to review and revise School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.112, Acceptable Use Policy for the Network.