

The passage of Senate Bill 181 (SB 181) establishes new statewide requirements for all Kentucky school districts, including Menifee County Schools, to ensure that all communication between school employees or volunteers and students is traceable, transparent, and professional. These changes are essential to creating and maintaining a safe, accountable, and legally compliant learning environment.

Key Provisions of SB 181

- All electronic communication with students must be traceable and accessible by the school district.
- Only district-approved platforms may be used for communication with students.
- Private or encrypted apps (such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, Signal, and GroupMe), personal texting, and personal email accounts are strictly prohibited for school-related communication unless a formal waiver has been filed and approved.
- Private, one-on-one social media interactions between staff and students are not allowed, except in cases where there is an immediate family relationship (e.g., parent, sibling, grandparent, etc.).
- The district is required to maintain archived records of all school-related student communication.

Approved Communication Platforms

Menifee County School District has approved the following platforms for two-way communication between school employees or volunteers and students:

- Microsoft Outlook Email (district-managed accounts only)
- Google Suite (written communication only)
- Edgenuity Learning Platform (comments and teacher feedback features only)
- Menifee County Finalsite App

Please note that video or voice calls via Google Meet, Google Chat video, or any other Google Workspace video tools are not allowed unless they are recorded or transcribed. These features are not enabled by default and should not be used for compliant communication.

Prohibited Communication Methods

Employees and volunteers must not use the following platforms or tools for any school-related communication with students:

- Personal email accounts (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, iCloud)
- Text messaging/SMS or voice calls via phones
- Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Discord
- Messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Signal, GroupMe, Snapchat
- Any other platform not explicitly approved by the district

In addition, comments will be disabled on official school social media accounts to prevent non-compliant communication.

Waivers for Traditional Communication Tools

In rare circumstances where there is a legitimate school-related reason to use traditional communication tools (such as personal text messages or phone calls), staff may do so only if a district-provided waiver form is completed and approved. Even with a waiver, the use of untraceable or auto-deleting platforms (e.g., Snapchat) is highly discouraged and remains risky. Staff using a waiver must keep a clear, written log or summary of any such communication, in accordance with district guidelines.

Reporting Requirements

Senate Bill 181 includes mandatory reporting requirements. Any unauthorized electronic communication between a student and an employee or volunteer must be reported immediately to the principal or superintendent. If the superintendent is involved, the report must be made to the Commissioner of Education and the Board Chair. If the individual is a certified employee, the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) must also be notified.

Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

All district employees and volunteers are expected to comply fully with the communication restrictions under SB 181. Staff members who supervise volunteers must ensure that those volunteers are aware of and follow the same rules and expectations.

Support and Training

The district will provide updated training and support to ensure all staff are familiar with the approved platforms, including any new features within the Menifee County Finals App. If you have questions or need assistance with implementation, please contact your building administrator or the district technology team.

Thank you for your continued commitment to student safety, transparency, and professionalism. Together, we will ensure that Menifee County Schools remains in full compliance with state law while maintaining a supportive and responsible educational environment.