



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 18, 2013

Board Amends Policy to Include Language Regarding Improper Use of Social Media

(Topeka, Kansas) - Recognizing the Kansas Board of Regents Policy Manual currently has no provisions specifically dealing with the use of social media, today the Board approved a policy that aims to respect and protect the rights of individuals to speak freely while also addressing employees' responsibility to the university.

Because of the proliferation of social media use for communication purposes, and its particular susceptibility to misuse and damage to our universities, the Board believes that a provision outlining improper uses of social media will be beneficial to all parties and uphold the universities' need to operate in an efficient and effective manner. The Board utilized language from United States Supreme Court cases to acknowledge the right of employees generally to speak as private citizens on matters of public concern while also recognizing the right of employers to take action in situations involving unprotected speech.

"The goal of this policy is to provide guidance to all university employees and university administration regarding the use of social media. We appreciate Attorney General Schmidt's office review of this policy and the determination that it is constitutional and does not violate any free speech or due process rights," stated Fred Logan, Chairman of the Kansas Board of Regents.

An addition to Chapter II, Section C.6., the full policy can be found here:
http://www.kansasregents.org/policy_chapter_ii_c_suspensions

###

About the Kansas Board of Regents:

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six universities and the statewide coordinating board for the state's 32 public higher education institutions (seven public universities, nineteen community colleges, and six technical colleges). In addition, the Board administers the state's student financial aid, adult education, GED, and career and technical education programs. The Board also authorizes private proprietary schools and out-of-state institutions to operate in Kansas, and administers the Kan-ed network, a program for facilitating and promoting distance learning and telemedicine in schools, libraries and hospitals. Visit the Kansas Board of Regents online at www.kansasregents.org.

For more information, contact Mary Jane Stankiewicz at (785) 260-5086 (cell) or mjstankiewicz@ksbor.org.