

TCPA	The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) is administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Updated in 2015, the rules prohibit calls made using automated telephone dialing equipment or a prerecorded message to any telephone number assigned to a cell phone or any service for which the called party is charged for the call without prior express consent, unless the call is for “emergency purposes” as defined by the TCPA. The FCC treats an SMS text message the same way as a voice call.
DEFINITION OF “EMERGENCY PURPOSE”	TCPA rules clarify the definition of “emergency purpose” (a situation affecting the health and safety of students and faculty). For example, emergency purpose could include weather closures, threats of imminent danger to the school (e.g. fire, dangerous persons, health risks e.g., toxic spills), and unexcused absences. Most of these notifications will be made by the District Communications Department.
CONSENT AND OPT-OUT	Schools must obtain consent for calling parents or guardians regarding non-emergency purposes if the communication is not clearly related to the school mission. Called parties must be able to revoke consent, or opt-out, at any time from SMS text messages or automated phone calls, and those numbers must be immediately blocked in the school notification system and that preference must be kept on file for future reference. Schools must provide parents with ongoing opportunities to revoke consent (in general or for specific types of communications) and to identify their preferred communications channel.
TCPA COMPLIANCE	While the new guidance provides schools with a little more flexibility, to ensure that EMS ISD campuses remain in compliance with TCPA rules, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD will only use automated phone calls from campuses or the district for attendance alerts and emergency situations, or other purposes as approved by the District Communications Department.
BEST PRACTICES FOR CAMPUSES	TCPA best practices for campuses: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regularly update emergency calling lists to ensure emergency-purpose calls reach the intended recipient.• Remind parents often to notify the school of any telephone number changes.• Honor opt-out requests and incorrect telephone numbers should be blocked from the calling system immediately upon notification. Opt-out preferences should be kept on file for future reference.

- Send email notifications to parents through SchoolMessenger, electronic flyers through Peachjar, post on campus websites, and utilize campus/department newsletters and social media pages to advertise campus events and announcements, PTA news, fundraisers, etc.
- Contact the District Communications Department regarding special circumstances.