

**EMPLOYEE USE of SOCIAL MEDIA SITES, INCLUDING PERSONAL SITES**

The following rules have been established to address social media site usage by all employees:

**KEEP PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTS SEPARATE**

Staff members who decide to engage in social media activities will maintain separate professional and personal accounts. Staff members will not use their district accounts, e-mail address, or school district computers or other school district equipment for personal social media activities.

**CONTACT WITH STUDENTS**

All staff shall maintain a professional relationship with all students, both inside and outside of the classroom.

- Listing current students as friends on networking sites wherein personal information is shared or available for review is not recommended;
- Contacting students through digital means should be limited to school-related purposes;
- Inappropriate contact of any kind, including via social media is prohibited.

Nothing in this policy prohibits District staff and students from the use of education websites and/or use of social media sites created for curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular purposes where an appropriate professional relationship is maintained with the student.

Failure to maintain an appropriate professional relationship with students, both inside and outside of a classroom setting, including interaction via social media sites of any nature, e-mailing, texting, or other digital methods could result in the reporting of the conduct to the Professional Teaching Standards Board by the district's administration and/or the imposition of disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**RULES CONCERNING DISTRICT-SPONSORED SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY**

Before an employee considers using social media for District purposes, they should make a good faith effort to select from digital and communication resources provided by the District. If an employee intends to use social networking sites or digital communication platforms to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements, etc. for a school-sponsored club or a school-based activity or an official

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school-based organization, the employee shall comply with the following procedures and requirements:

**1. Seek Approval from the District**

Employees that have or would like to start a social media account for District purposes must obtain the approval from the following:

- Principal/Director,
- IT director,
- and the Superintendent/Designee.

All such media accounts must have a minimum of two appointed employees who are identified as being responsible for content and have site management rights. The Principal/Director and/or Superintendent/Designee should be aware of the content on the site, arrange for periodic monitoring of the site, and for the receipt of and response to complaints about the content on the site. The Superintendent or his/her designee reserves the right to shut down the site if he/she believes it is in the best overall interest of the students.

**2. Have a Plan**

Employees will consider their messages, audiences, and goals, as well as strategy for keeping information on social media sites up to date, accurate, and in the best interest of the students and the District. Employees shall ensure that only students whose parent/guardian has authorized disclosure of the student's image to be depicted on any social media site.

**3. Protect the District**

Posts on district-affiliated social media sites should protect the District by remaining professional in tone and content as approved by the district. Careful consideration must be given to the naming of pages or accounts, selection of pictures or icons, compliance with District policy, state, and federal laws with regard to student and employee confidentiality, and the determination of content.

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The employee must also comply with the following rules:

1. The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be closed and moderated.
2. The employee must set up mechanisms for delivering information to students that are not members of the group via non-electronic means.
3. Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g., teacher, administrator, or supervisor). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
4. Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join. Parents shall report any communications they believe to be inappropriate by students or school personnel to administration.
5. Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization, or team.
6. The employees responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
7. School district administration shall be permitted access to any site established by the employees for a school-related purpose.
8. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all district-sponsored social media activity. This includes maintaining a separation between the school activity pages and employees personal social media profiles and pages.
9. Postings made to the site must comply with all other district policies pertaining to district websites, Internet usage, technology and confidentiality of student information and likeness or image.

**PERSONAL SITES**

Employees are responsible for the content on their personal social media sites, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends or members of the public who can access the employee's site, and for Web links on the employee's site. If you identify yourself as a District employee online, it should be clear that the views expressed, posted, or published are personal views, not necessarily those of the District, its Board, employees or agents.

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Opinions and/or other content expressed or posted by staff on a social media site have the potential to be disseminated far beyond the speaker's desire or intention, and could undermine the public perception of the individual's fitness to educate students, and thus undermine teaching effectiveness. In this way, the effect of the expression and publication of opinions or other content could potentially lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member, up to and including termination or nonrenewal of the contract of employment.

Employees who use social media for personal purposes should be aware that the content they post may be viewed by anyone, including students, parents and community members. Employees shall observe the following principles when communicating through social media:

1. Employees shall not post confidential information about students, employees or school system business.
2. Employees shall be professional in all Internet postings related to or referencing the school system, students and other employees.
3. Employees shall not post identifiable images of a student or student's family without permission from the student and the student's parent or legal guardian.
4. Employees shall not post content that impacts their ability to perform their jobs.
5. Employees shall be responsible for all content posted on their site by themselves and others and shall regularly monitor their site and remove any content that could reasonably be anticipated to cause a substantial disruption to the school environment.

**CONSEQUENCES**

School system personnel may audit online activities of employees who access the Internet using school technology resources. Any employee who has been found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**PROTECT CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

Employees shall not post confidential information about the district, its employees, students, agents, or others. The employee shall adhere to all applicable privacy and

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confidentiality policies adopted by the district or as provided by state or federal law.

**DO NOT USE DISTRICT NAME, LOGOS, OR IMAGES**

Employees shall not use the district logos, images, etc. on personal social media sites for promotional purposes; nor shall employees use the district name to promote a product, cause or political party, or political candidate; nor shall employees use personal images of students, or names or data relating to students, absent written authority of the parent of a minor or authority of an adult or emancipated student.

Policy References:

EHAA - Acceptable Use of Technology

First Reading: 4-6-26

Second Reading: 5-4-26