

APPROPRIATE USE OF ELECTRONIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Background

The District encourages responsible use of social media technologies and other forms of electronic communication to support learning, for school district business and communication purposes. However, social media usage must be undertaken in a manner that is respectful, privacy compliant, and consistent with the role of school district staff within the community.

This Administrative Procedure has been developed to provide employees and students with guidelines to understand the impact of social media and electronic communications and their appropriate uses in order to ensure professional communication standards, and to mitigate the school district's, employee's, and student's exposure to risk. An employee's online conduct is subject to the same standards that ordinarily apply to their on and off-duty conduct. District and School Code(s) of Conduct also apply.

Definitions

"Social media" refers to all forms of internet-based applications and technologies that allow end users to engage in conversations, provide input or opinions, create and share content, collaborate, share ideas, message other users, etc. Social media includes, but is not limited to: social networking, blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, instant messaging, texting and video streaming. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, Google+, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

"Electronic communication" refers to any written, audio, video, visual or digital communications occurring between employees or any one or more individuals through electronic means, including email, texting, and other messaging services whether or not such communications are internet based.

Procedures

1. No Expectation of Privacy
 - 1.1 Employees should understand that there is no expectation of privacy in the use of social media or electronic communications, and that online and other electronically recorded communications may be read, accessed, or published by third parties or transferred without the knowledge or consent of the creator.
2. Responsibility of Employees
 - 2.1 Employees are responsible for their electronic communications and for any content that they publish online, whether it is under the employee's own name, an alias, or anonymous, and must ensure it complies with applicable laws, this Administrative Procedure, and professional standards of conduct, including those of the Ministry of

- 3.8 In order to maintain a professional and appropriate relationship with students, district employees should not “friend” or “follow” students on their personal social media sites, especially if there is a teacher/student relationship, and should not request or accept any students as “friends” or “followers” on social media sites. Employees should also refrain from interacting with students on social media sites for purposes not related to the delivery of a student’s educational program.
- 3.9 Employees should ask friends not to tag them in any photos or videos without their permission and remove anything that is not appropriate to the employee’s role in the School District, particularly for social media sites that do not have appropriate privacy settings.
- 3.10 Confidential/sensitive information pertaining to the employee’s role in the School District or information involving the operation of the School District that is/was obtained through the course of employment shall not be disclosed on social media sites without permission.

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- 5.4 Principal(s) must approve school-based social media groups, including class-specific groups that will be supervised and monitored by a teacher or other employee.
- 5.5 Employees are responsible for ensuring that any use of social media or other electronic communications with students complies with School District policies. Any personal student information that is posted to social media websites or circulated in other electronic communications while the student is under an employee's supervision must be compliant with the permission granted by the student's parents/guardians in a signed School District media release form ([Form 151 – Student Information/Media Release](#)).
- 5.6 All professional social media sites are to be maintained by a school administrator/supervisor or a school/district employee delegated by the school administrator/supervisor. Responsibility is not to be delegated to a parent volunteer or student, as the established social media site will represent the School District.
- 5.7 The School District shall not disclose any information that is confidential, proprietary, or otherwise subject to legal protection, including but not limited to student information, personnel records, financial information, or other sensitive data, through any social media platform or website. Any such information posted on a social media platform or website shall be considered public information and may be subject to public release.

