

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The School Board recognizes that social media sites have become important means of communication with potential educational value. This policy sets forth expectations for school employees when using social media for school-related purposes. Employees are expected to preserve the integrity of the learning environment and shall maintain professional boundaries with students at all times.

‘Social media’ shall mean technology and/or internet-based tool(s) for sharing and/or discussing information among users, and includes, but is not limited to, web pages, social networking, blogs, forums, social bookmarking, image sharing applications, and social news sites.

A. Approval Procedure

The use of social media for school-related purposes requires pre-approval in accordance with this policy.

A school employee who desires to use social media for school-related purposes shall submit a proposal and request for approval to his/her building principal/supervisor. Proposals for the school-related use of social media should include an articulated educational purpose and be appropriate to the students’ ages, level(s) of understanding, and range(s) of knowledge. Use of social media with students is limited to grades seven and higher. Any student under 13 needs parent permission to access approved social media.

The building principal/supervisor or designee may approve, deny, or approve with modification the proposal. The decision of the building principal/supervisor will be in writing and the decision shall be final. Any later modifications to a proposal that has been approved must also be pre-approved by the building principal/supervisor. The building principal/supervisor may withdraw his or her approval at any time for any reason.

Approved proposals for the school-related use of social media shall be resubmitted annually to the employee’s supervisor for review and approval.

B. Terms of Use

The school-related use of social media approved in accordance with this policy shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Content on approved social media shall at all times comply with school unit policies, procedures and guidelines as well as with any applicable state and federal laws (including confidentiality laws).
2. The responsible school employee shall monitor student use of the approved social media and shall remove content that violates school unit policies, procedures or guidelines and/or state or federal laws. Any inappropriate use of approved social media shall be reported to building administration.
3. The school unit may monitor any approved social media for compliance with applicable policies, procedures, guidelines and/or laws.

C. Personal Use of Social Media

The Board understands that many school employees use social media for personal purposes on personal time. Employees shall keep this professional social media presence separate from their personal social media. Employees shall not use work time, for personal use of social media.

School employees are expected to exhibit professional decorum on social media and shall not engage in conduct which distracts from or disrupts the educational process of students or the operations of the schools.

Violations of this policy may result in the withdrawal of approval to utilize social media for school purposes and/or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, depending on the circumstances of each case.

Cross Reference: GCSA – Employee Computer and Internet Use
 GCSA-R – Employee Computer and Internet Use Rules
 IJNCD – Student Computer and Internet Use

Approved: 6/7/18