

## **Board of Education**

### **Exhibit – Social Networking: Expectations for Staff**

#### Lemont High School District 210 - Social Networking - Staff Expectations

Lemont High School District 210 recognizes that today's students are deeply engaged in electronic forms of communication for their daily interactions with friends, family and their larger social networks. As educators, we too have turned to e-mail, websites, blogs, text messaging, and use of social media to communicate. While these forms of communications are dynamic, mobile, and quickly reach their audiences through technologies that have become an integral part of our online lives, they may, in many circumstances, not meet District 210's professional standards for communicating with students, staff, parents and other members of the public.

The information outlined in this document is designed to:

- Protecting District 210's students, faculty and staff
- Raise awareness of acceptable ways to use electronic communications tools when communicating with students, parents and others
- Raise awareness of the positive and negative outcomes that may result in using these tools with students, parents and others

#### Does the communication pass the TAPE Test?

- a. Is this communication *Transparent*? – All electronic communication between District 210 employees and their targeted audiences should be transparent, with the knowledge that the communication is not inherently private and could be viewed by others. As a public school district, we are expected to maintain openness, visibility and accountability with regard to all communications.
- b. Is this communication *Accessible*? – All electronic communication between District 210 employees and their targeted audiences should be considered a matter of record, is part of the District's archives, and/or may be accessible by others or subject to FOIA requests.
- c. Is this communication *Professional*? – All electronic communication between District 210 employees and their targeted audiences should be written or communicated in a manner that properly represents Lemont High School District 210. This includes word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards, integrity and excellence that are expected from every District 210 employee. When communicating, be mindful to choose words that are courteous, conscientious and professional in nature.
- d. Is the communication *Ethical*? – All electronic communication between District 210 employees and their intended audiences should be free from harassing or intimidating (bullying and/or cyber bullying) content and comply with existing Board of Education policies.

#### Appropriate Use

Social media can be viewed as an extension of our classroom and administrative environments when used for conducting district business or activities. Conduct that is deemed inappropriate within the classroom, school or any district environment should also be deemed inappropriate online or when using any of these technologies for district communications.

District 210 employees always should consider the age appropriateness of the social media or network environments being considered for use within our educational system. District 210

employees are required to abide by the age appropriateness of the tools utilized, as well as the specific approval procedures required by these guidelines.

#### District Expectations:

- Monitor students' use of any social networking platform on which may assign them work.
- Maintain professional communication with students, faculty, staff and others on any social networking sites utilized.
- Report any violations of the district's Acceptable Use Policy or any other inappropriate use of social networking sites to the appropriate personnel.
- Maintain class or educational online communication tools.
- Communicate in a manner that reflects positively upon District 210 and the school.
- Through all electronic tools, reflect instructional goals and clearly demonstrate connections to educational projects, activities or goals.

#### Using Student Names and Photos on Social Media

Faculty and staff will be provided a list of students at the onset of each school year whose photos and/or names may not be used for publicity purposes or through social media. Through the registration process, students are permitted to use Internet-based tools unless a parent/guardian excludes the child from Internet permissions.

#### Online Games and Related Activities

Unless part of a school-recognized event or organization, faculty and staff should refrain from engaging in these activities with District 210 students.

#### Personal Technology/Social Networking Tools:

Faculty and staff should use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Such use must occur during times and in places in which the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.

#### Posting in Public Places/Social Media:

As professionals, faculty and staff should be wary of posting items on any website or social media account that could be embarrassing or disruptive to the environment in which they work. It is expected that information accessible on any website or through any social media network about a District 210 employee will be professional and responsible. It is not District 210's intent to monitor these sites; however, it has an obligation to investigate if an issue is brought to the attention of District 210 or building administrators.

#### Guidelines for educators using personal websites/social networking tools:

- Do not accept District 210 students as friends on personal social networking sites. Decline any student-initiated friend requests. If you already have accepted a friend request from a student, take the appropriate steps to "unfriend" that student until, at the very least, he/she has graduated from Lemont High School.
- Remember that people classified as "friends" have the ability to download and share your information with others.
- Post only what you want the world to see. Imagine students, their parents/guardians, and District administrators visiting your profile. What is appropriate for them to see?
- Do not discuss confidential information relating to students, parents/guardians or co-workers.

- When using social media outlets with access permissions: visit your profile's security and privacy settings frequently. Consider having privacy settings to "only friends" so as not to open up personal content to a large group of unknown people.
- Weigh whether a particular posting puts your effectiveness as a District 210 employee at risk.
- Exercise caution in regards to exaggeration, colorful language, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.

***Any employee who learns of information on a social networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines must report it as required by law.***

Respect all applicable copyright, fair use, and disclosure laws.

As the world of social media and social networking continues to evolve, Lemont High School District 210 wants to ensure it provides safe and secure access to these platforms for students, faculty and staff. It is important to ensure that such tools are utilized for educational purposes and under the directive of improving communication and collaboration among students, faculty and staff.

DATED:                    September 15, 2015