

ENCINITAS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA and DIGITAL COMMUNICATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Board Approved June 6, 2017

POLICY AND GUIDELINE CONTEXT

This social media policy (the “Policy”) sets forth the expectations and guidelines for all staff and educator use of social media and digital communication, including both the school network and/or other networks.

The Policy applies to all District employees (full-time and part-time) who choose to utilize social media in any form and/or digital technologies to post communications using district equipment and/or the district network.

This **Policy** (*required*) applies to all digital communication for **professional** social media use. These **Guidelines** (*suggested*) apply to all digital communication for **personal** social media use.

These Guidelines **do not** address student-to-student communication via social media. Those communications are covered by the District’s Acceptable Use Policy, aka Responsible Use Policy.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDELINES & THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOLS

The District recognizes that social media and digital communication can provide educational and professional benefits; serving as a powerful tool to facilitate timely communication and enhance the overall learning experience.

Social media and digital communication have the potential to allow for less thoughtful communication and can blur professional and personal boundaries.

DEFINITIONS

Social Media includes any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, Internet websites, Internet forums, virtual worlds, podcasts and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Google+, and Flickr. Additionally, emails, text messages, website posting, and other forms of digital communication can be considered forms of social media.

Professional Social Media is work-related social media activity that has been approved by the District. Examples include a classroom blog, Twitter account or School Facebook page used to communicate with members of the school community.

Personal Social Media is social media activity that is not associated with or monitored by the District and which may or may not utilize the school network (e.g., an educator’s personal Facebook page or YouTube account for his/her personal use).

Digital Communication is the electronic transmission of information that has been encoded digitally (as for storage and processing by computers). Examples include texts, emails, instant messages and social media posts.

District Approved Digital Technology is any technology – including hardware (such as computers, laptops or cell phones) and software (such as email accounts, applications and wiki pages) provided by the District and/or approved for use by the District.

USE OF DISTRICT APPROVED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY OR PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- I understand that all digital communication with students shall take place on Professional Social Media Accounts through District Approved Digital Technologies.⁽¹⁾
- I understand that all school-related digital communications with parents, staff and other members of the school community shall take place on Professional Social Media Accounts through District Approved Digital Technologies.
- I understand that all digital communication with members of the school community must comply with the District's Acceptable Use Policy (*aka Responsible Use Policy*) regardless of whether on a Professional or Personal Social Media account.
- I understand that the District will maintain a list of all professional social media accounts approved and used in the district.

GENERAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- I understand that I should treat my Professional Social Media account and all Digital Communication with the school community like a classroom and/or a professional workplace.
- The same professional norms expected in District professional settings are expected in the digital environment. If a particular type of behavior is inappropriate in the classroom or a professional workplace, then that behavior is also inappropriate on professional social media.

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR POLICY

Using Professional Social Media and Digital Communication Accounts

- I **shall** not post any information or engage in communications that violate state or federal laws (including, but not limited to, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and intellectual property laws) or District policies.
- I understand that my role as a mandated reporter also applies to any conduct or content that I observe in any social media account or digital communication.
- I shall be professional in all district communications (by word, image or other means) directed towards or that could be viewed by members of the school community.
- I shall not use obscene, profane or vulgar language on district social media networks and/or district communications.
- I shall not engage in communications or conduct that is harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory or that discusses or encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, or bullying.

- I shall not use my district e-mail address or other employment-related identity for communications on social media networks that have not been approved by the District.
- I shall make it clear that my personal views do not necessarily reflect the views of the District.
- I shall follow trademark and copyright laws, and practice fair use requirements in all professional digital communications and social media accounts.
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MONITORING OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

- I understand that the District has the authority and responsibility to protect minors from inappropriate content and communication and, as result, may monitor all communication that takes place on the District’s network or through the District Approved Digital Technologies and Professional Social Media Accounts.
- I understand that the District may review Professional Social Media Accounts and District Approved Digital Technologies. Employees may be asked to disclose the existence of and to provide the District with access to an employee’s professional social media account.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- I shall not disclose information on any social media network that is confidential or proprietary to the District, its students, or employees or that is protected by data privacy laws. **(Training provided by district)**
- I shall not post images of students on any social media network without written parental consent, except for images of students taken in the public arena, such as at sporting events or fine arts public performances.
- I shall not violate the privacy rights of any member of the school community.
- District employees should use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal and professional social media sites.
- I am aware that any professional communication using district social media and/or digital communications is subject to public records requests.

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Using Personal Social Media and Digital Communication Accounts

- I should not post any information or engage in communications that violate state or federal laws (including, but not limited to, the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and intellectual property laws) or District policies.
- I should be civil in all communications (by word, image or other means) directed towards or could be viewed by members of the school community.
- I should not use obscene, profane or vulgar language on my personal social media networks in a manner that could negatively impact my role within the school community.
- I should not use my personal accounts for professional responsibilities.

- I should not post inappropriate images on social media networks or digital communications of co-workers without the co-workers' consent.
- I should be aware that any inappropriate social media or digital communication (district and/or personal) that causes a **substantial disruption** to student learning can impact and potentially result in disciplinary action.
- I should immediately report any inappropriate, threatening, harassing contact from any member of the school community to Admin Services.

RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

- I understand that I have a right to be free of harassment or other offensive behavior when on a professional and/or personal social media account.
- I understand that to ensure information remains private, I should regularly check my privacy settings.
- I understand that district employees have a right to some reasonable level of personal privacy when using District or Personal technology. Staff user history related to application programs, website history, or specific technology tools used by staff are not available for release to the general public without cause, adhering to District electronic surveillance policies and protocols.
- I understand that the district will not randomly review staff technology access and use except for analyzing student use and results on District technology instructional tools.
- I understand that the district may review such access and use when specific concerns related to instructional practice, violation of District policies and potential legal issues.
- I understand If I find any information that is unwanted, posted by a third party, I may report it to the appropriate administrator and/or agencies.

I have read and understand the above policy and guidelines.

Name of Employee:

Position:

Date:

[1] An exception to this Policy exists to allow District employees to use personal social media accounts to communicate (1) with a student who is a relative; (2) in an emergency situation requiring such communication, in which case the District employee should notify his/her supervisor of the contact as soon as possible; and (3) if specific authorization has been given to the District employee from the Superintendent or his/her designee.