

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Alexandria City Public Schools and its employees are committed to using technology consistently, responsibly and effectively for teaching and learning, communications and productivity.

ACPS recognizes and supports the use of approved online social media to enhance instruction and research, support the learning environment and improve communication. ACPS also strives to teach employees and students about responsible and safe use of these technologies. ACPS employees may use these tools and other communication technologies in fulfilling their responsibility for communicating appropriately and effectively with students, parents and the general public.

For purposes of this policy, online social media is defined to include web logs (blogs), wikis, social media networks, online forums, virtual worlds and any other social media generally available to the public or consumers.

Professional Use of Social Media

Online social media, outside of those pre-approved by the Division, may not be used for classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities without the prior authorization of the Superintendent or designee, and parental consent for student participation on social networks. GAC-R: ACPS Social Media Regulations, includes information about availability and access to a current list of preapproved social media, as well as a procedure for seeking prior authorization for any other social media resources, and forms for seeking parental consent.

ACPS recognizes that student groups or members of the public may create social media representing students or groups within the Division. Any social media created by an employee in furtherance of fulfilling his/her job responsibilities is the property of ACPS and may be monitored by ACPS.

When employees, coaches or club advisors choose to join or engage in social networks created for school-sponsored groups, they must observe professional standards and appropriate interactions as members of these online communities. They must identify themselves as employees of ACPS and they must ensure that their supervisors have access to the site passwords and content of these interactions.

Conduct that is prohibited in the face-to-face instructional environment is also prohibited through electronic communication. Online communication between employees, volunteers and individual students must be transparent and accessible to supervisors. Parents should have access to online communication between their student and ACPS employees or volunteers. All online communication should be professional in content and tone, and must adhere to Policy JHA/GBAA: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse.

49 Employees have the responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-student relationships  
50 at all times, including during any online or social media interactions, whether utilizing ACPS  
51 resources or private social media. Employees who choose to engage in social media with ACPS  
52 students have the responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these  
53 networks by students or other participants on these networks, in accordance with ACPS policies  
54 and regulations. Additionally, ACPS employees who have reason to suspect, based on  
55 information learned through social media that a student is engaging in or is the victim of illegal  
56 conduct online should report this conduct to the student’s principal, and must make any reports  
57 required by law.

58  
59 In order to ensure accuracy and currency of content, employees who create or utilize social  
60 media with their students or in any manner in the fulfillment of their ACPS responsibilities  
61 shall annually disclose to ACPS the existence of and their participation in such social media  
62 sites/accounts in accordance with GAC-R: ACPS Social Media Regulations.

63  
64 Personal Use of Social Media

65  
66 All ACPS employees are required to serve as responsible representatives for our schools and  
67 the school division and to remember they are role models to students in the community.  
68 Employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate  
69 local, state or federal laws or Division policies, are otherwise disruptive to the educational  
70 environment of the school, or are inconsistent with employees’ ability to discharge job  
71 responsibilities.

72  
73 ACPS requires employees to observe professional standards when referring to the Division, its  
74 schools, students, programs, activities, employees, volunteers and communities on any social  
75 media networks. The Superintendent will develop regulations that detail the professional  
76 standards and expectations for employees who use social media.

77  
78 An employee who maintains personal social media accounts that are accessible to students  
79 (either by lack of security or granted access) shall avoid posting any content that is  
80 inappropriate for minors.

81  
82 An employee who is responsible for a social media network or posting that fails to comply with  
83 this policy and Regulation GAC-R may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

84  
85 Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of  
86 confidential or private information, and information that violates the privacy rights or other  
87 rights of a third party.  
88

89  
90 Adopted: June 21, 2012  
91 Amended: February 4, 2016  
92

93  
94 Cross Refs.: GAC-R ACPS Social Media Regulations  
95 IIBEA/GAB Responsible Use of Technology  
96 JHA/GBAA Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse