

SECTION: Operations

**BERMUDIAN SPRINGS
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

TITLE: Social Media

ADOPTED: June 15, 2021

REVISED:

<p>1. Purpose</p> <p>2. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>3. Definitions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">815.1. SOCIAL MEDIA</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure the orderly operation of the Bermudian Springs School District's schools by establishing standards for the operation of District social media accounts, and to differentiate between personal and third-party social media accounts and those accounts controlled by the District.</p> <p>The Superintendent shall develop procedures to implement this policy and may delegate to his/her designee(s) the right to enforce this policy.</p> <p>Discriminatory or Harassing Comments – comments or imagery that attack or mock an individual due to his/her real or perceived race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.</p> <p>Designated public forum - created when a school district social media account is intentionally opened for use by the public as a place for expressive activity where members of the public may communicate, post or comment on information, subject to viewpoint neutral rules designated by the Board. In terms of social media, this would include the ability of public users to comment on, or reply to, social media posts, pictures, or videos.</p> <p>Non-public Forum – created when a school district social media account enables members of the public to read and receive district information, but the district has not designated opportunity for expressive activity by the public, and no commenting or posting of information by members of the public is permitted. In terms of social media, the ability to comment, post or reply is disabled on the district’s account for public users.</p> <p>Personal Social Media Account – a social media account, regardless of platform, that is attributed to and operated by a District employee or school board member for his/her personal use, and is not approved by the Board as an official communications channel of the District. A personal account is not regularly used to promote or communicate about or on District events or activities, or the activities of students. Personal Social Media Account users may occasionally</p>
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<p>22 Pa. Code § 235.9</p>	<p>Social Media Account is operated as a non-public forum or Designated public forum shall be determined by the account operator.</p> <p>School District Social Media Accounts that operate as a Designated Public Forum shall include a prominent link to the following comment guidelines, posted on the District’s website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Comments must be related to the original District post b. No personal attacks c. No lewd, vulgar, or obscene posts d. No discriminatory or harassing comments e. No posts promoting violence or illegal conduct <p>Individual comments or posts that violate the above guidelines may be deleted (if possible, given the social media platform) without further notice. Posts may <u>not</u> be deleted simply because they are critical of the District, or because they promote an unpopular opinion, if the post otherwise complies with the above guidelines.</p> <p>School District Social Media Account operators may not block users from accessing the District’s social media posts. The School District Social Media Account operator shall refer any user who repeatedly violates the above guidelines to the Superintendent for further investigation and potential legal remedies.</p>
<p>28 C.F.R. § 35.160</p>	<p><u>Tagging</u></p> <p>School District Social Media Account operators may tag the social media accounts of educational applications, products, and services, so long as the District and its employees do not receive financial or other tangible compensation for the tag. [2]</p> <p>School District Social Media Accounts shall not be used to communicate directly with students. One-to-one communication with a student shall be limited to electronic resources provided by the District such as e-mail or classroom management applications.</p> <p><u>Accessibility</u></p> <p>All content posted to School District Social Media Accounts shall be as accessible to individuals with disabilities as it is to non-disabled individuals. To ensure accessibility, so long as the social media platform allows, social media posts must: [3]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. include alternate text or detailed captions for images b. include captions for videos c. include captions for livestreams d. avoid images of text e. avoid acronyms, wherever possible f. ensure that links to PDFs are accessible to screen readers <p>The Superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that all individuals operating School District Social Media Accounts receive training on social media accessibility.</p>

<p>Pol. 824</p> <p>22 Pa Code §235 et seq.</p> <p>24 P.S. §§2070.1 et seq.</p> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99</p> <p>24 P.S. § 11-1122</p> <p><i>Pickering v. Board of Education</i>, 391 U.S. 563 (1968)</p>	<p><u>Copyright</u> The copyright for all content posted to School District Social Media Accounts must be either owned by the Bermudian Springs School District, licensed by the copyright owner, or not subject to copyright protection. The operator of a School District Social Media Account is responsible for ensuring compliance with this provision.</p> <p><u>Retweets / Reposts</u> School District Social Media Accounts may highlight social media posts by others by retweeting or reposting their messages, so long as the retweet/repost follows these guidelines.</p> <p><u>Discipline</u> District employees that operate a School District Social Media Account may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for failing to abide by this policy.</p> <p><u>PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS</u></p> <p>District employees may not use personal social media accounts to communicate privately (via direct message or private chat) with students concerning any school district business. One-to-one communication with a student concerning any school district business shall be limited to the electronic resources provided by the District such as e-mail or classroom management applications. District employee shall review Board Policy 824 – Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries before communicating, through social media, privately with a student.</p> <p>District employees are urged to exercise extreme caution before communicating with students via social media about non-school matters. Such electronic communication may cross professional boundaries in violation of the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators, and the Educator Discipline Act. District employees are urged to maintain strict professional boundaries on social media, and to protect against even the appearance of impropriety. [4]</p> <p>District employees and board members shall not post personally identifiable and otherwise confidential information from educational records on their Personal Social Media Accounts. Personally identifiable information includes information that could indirectly identify a student through linkages with other information. [5]</p> <p>District employees are strongly encouraged to utilize privacy settings on Personal Social Media Accounts to ensure that a professional boundary is maintained between the employee and students and parents. Employees should be aware that even privacy settings are not fool-proof. It is recommended that employees keep in mind at all times their status as professionals.</p>
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<p>5. Consequences</p>	<p>The District does not actively monitor Personal Social Media Accounts for its employees. Nonetheless, should the District administration or school board’s attention be brought to a Personal Social Media Account post, that is otherwise unprotected speech, and the post violates some District policy or regulation, or meets any reason outlined in School Code, the employee may be discipline, up to an including termination. [6] [7]</p> <p>The District recognizes that District employees have certain first amendment rights associated with free speech on social media posts. The District shall not discipline, retaliate, or otherwise provide an adverse action against a District employee for engaging in protected speech.</p> <p><u>THIRD PARTY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS</u></p> <p>Third Party Social Media Accounts are not operated or controlled by the District. These accounts are privately created and maintained and are not actively monitored by the District.</p> <p>Third Party Social Media Accounts may <i>not</i> use the District’s logo, unless given express written permission by the Superintendent.</p> <p>The District encourages the operators of all Third Party Social Media Accounts to be good-faith ambassadors of the District, and to operate these Third Party Social Media Accounts in a manner that represents the District in a positive light.</p> <p><u>Consequences for Violation of this policy</u></p> <p>Employees that violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.</p>
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[1] Bermudian Springs School District Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet

[2] 22 Pa. Code 235.9 - Improper personal or financial gain

[3] 28 CFR 35.160 - General

[4] 22 Pa Code 235 et seq. - Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators

[5] 20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99 - Family educational and privacy rights

[6] 24 P.S. 11-1122 - Causes for termination of contract

[7] Pickering v. Board of Education, 391 U.S. 563 (1968)