

Social Media

Section A – Introduction

The Board of Education recognizes the potential benefits for the use of district-approved Social Media and other online technologies (as set forth in the Guidelines under Section B) by employees, students and school-based groups for school-related purposes. At the same time, the Board also recognizes the potential impact on students, employees and the school community as well as the liability that can occur if such resources are used improperly or not conscientiously managed.

Social media - Media for social interaction, using highly accessible communication techniques through the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue, audio-sharing, photo-sharing, and/or video-sharing.

Employees with personal social media and other online technology accounts must be conscientious (including, without limitation, with respect to their obligations under Policy 5:120) about how their use of social media may impact their suitability for employment in a public school district.

Section B – Guidelines for the Use of District-Approved Social Media and Other Online Technologies

The Board directs the superintendent to establish Guidelines for the school-related use of district-approved Social Media and other online technologies by employees, students and school-based groups.

Section C – Parameters for the Use of District-Approved Social Media and Other Online Technologies

Staff and students shall use district-approved Social Medias under the following guidelines.

1. Approved student organizations that wish to use social media are required to use district-approved Social Media accounts, and may use such accounts for information, education, and public relations purposes consistent with the purpose of the student organization and with this Policy and the Guidelines referenced in Section B, above.
2. Students will use district-approved Social Media accounts as directed by teachers or student organization sponsors/supervisors in connection with coursework or student organization activities consistent with this Policy and the Guidelines referenced in Section B, above.
3. Improper student or student organization use of district-approved Social Media accounts may result in the student's or student organization's being denied access to district-approved Social Media accounts for a period of time to be determined by the Administration.

Section D - Staff Member Use of Personal Social Media and Other Online Technologies

Personal technology - Any device that is not owned or leased by the district or otherwise authorized for District use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication, or information networks. This includes laptop computers (e.g., laptops, ultrabooks, and chromebooks), tablets (e.g., iPads®, Kindle®, Microsoft Surface®, and other Android® platform or Windows® devices), smartphones (e.g., iPhone® or Android® platform phones), and similar devices.

All District employees who use personal technology and/or social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for Professional and Appropriate Conduct required by 5:120 Policy - Employee Ethics and Conduct, and 2:105 Policy - Ethics Act - Prohibited Political Activities and Gift Ban at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by 5:20 Policy - Harassment - Employees, 5:102 Policy - Mandated Compliance Training, 5:120 Policy - Employee Ethics and Conduct, 2:105 Policy - Ethics Act - Prohibited Political Activities and Gift Ban, 6:235 Policy - Purpose and Use of Technology and Network Resources, 7:181 Policy - Harassment - Students, and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Use a District-approved social media account to communicate school-related matters with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services through the use of personal technology and/or social media.
4. Promptly inform their immediate supervisor if a student initiates contact with them via any form of personal technology or non-district-approved social media and provide a copy of the contact attempt.
5. Report instances of suspected abuse or neglect discovered through the use of social media or personal technology pursuant to a school employee's obligations under 5:90 Policy - Abused and Neglected Child Reporting.
6. Not disclose via personal technology or personal social media student record information, including student work, photographs or videos of students, names of students, or any other personally identifiable information about students.
7. Refrain from using the District's logos without written permission from the District's Executive Director of Communications.
8. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
9. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate content through the employee's personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.
10. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

Section E - Implementation

The Superintendent shall:

1. Inform District employees about this policy during the in-service on educator ethics, teacher-student conduct, and school employee-student conduct required by Board 5:120 Policy - Employee Ethics and Conduct.
2. Direct Building Principals to annually:
 - a. Provide their building staff with a copy of this policy.
 - b. Inform their building staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
 - c. Remind their building staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
3. Build awareness of this policy with students and parents.
4. Ensure that neither the District, nor anyone on its behalf, commits an act prohibited by the Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act, 820 ILCS 55/10.
5. Periodically review this policy and any procedures with District employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Board.

Section F – Related Board Policies

This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with:

1. 2:105 Policy - Ethics Act - Prohibited Political Activities and Gift Ban
2. 5:102 Policy - Mandated Compliance Training,
3. 5:120 Policy - Employee Ethics and Conduct
4. 5:20 Policy - Harassment - Employees,
5. 6:235 Policy - Purpose and Use of Technology and Network Resources
6. 8:11 Policy - District Website 7:190 Policy - Student Behavior, Misconduct, and Rights and Responsibilities
7. 7:181 Policy - Harassment - Students and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
8. 7:180 Policy - Bullying
9. 7:196 Policy - Academic Integrity Violations

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