

**Social Media**

The Bethany Board of Education (Board) recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media or personal online accounts under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' use of personal online accounts, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

1. interferes, disrupts, or undermines the effective operation of the Bethany Public School District (District);
2. is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening, or similarly inappropriate communications;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of District employees; or
5. violates the law, Board policies, and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal References:      U.S. Constitution, Amendment I  
                                 Connecticut Constitution, Article I, §§ 3, 4, 14  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes § 31-40x  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes § 31-48d  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes § 31-51q  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250  
                                 Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

Policy adopted:      April 9, 2014  
Policy revised:      November 9, 2016  
Policy revised:      December 9, 2020  
Policy reviewed:      May 10, 2023

Source: Shipman