

# AFSA High School

Adopted: February 28, 2017

District 4074

*Revised:*

## 440 SOCIAL MEDIA USE

### I. PURPOSE

AFSA recognizes the expanding use of networking sites and blogs (on-line message postings and informational and opinion exchanges such as Facebook or Twitter) as a valuable component of communication with families, students, staff, and community. AFSA also recognizes the importance of using social media responsibly in the changing education world. AFSA is also aware that social media will not be used exclusively for school business and that many are utilizing blogs and social networking sites for personal use. The purpose of this policy is to guide the professional and personal use of social media by all AFSA employees.

### II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Social media: Includes, but is not limited to, online media such as: websites, web logs (blogs), wikis, online forums, podcasts, virtual worlds, and social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Tumblr, Flickr, LinkedIn, YouTube, blog sites, etc.)
- B. Employees: Any staff person of AFSA, AFSA school board member, as as any agent, independent contractor, or other person engaging in work for AFSA.
- C. Work time: Includes any time for which the employee is being compensated by AFSA, excluding vacations, sick days, personal leave, and paid holidays.

### III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. This policy has been developed for AFSA employees who maintain personal blogs, post comments on the blogs of others, and/or maintain personal social networking sites. The sites covered by this policy include any electronic form of communication, including social networking; professional networking sites; and live blogging tools, as well as your personal blogs and those hosted by other organizations that you either author or post comments.
- B. Disclosure of AFSA proprietary or personal information is prohibited for your blog or posts per this policy and any other applicable policy or agreement you may have signed with AFSA. The AFSA logo, trademarks and/or images may not be used without written approval from the AFSA Executive Director or Executive Director designee. In addition, information related to AFSA students, families, policy, inventions, strategy, research, financials and services that are not “public data,” as it is defined in the Minnesota

Government Data Practices Act, Minn.Stat. Chapter 13, cannot appear in your posting under any circumstances.

- C. If employees electronically publish anything that discloses their association with AFSA, they must never write or post anything that leaves readers with the impression they are speaking on behalf of AFSA– unless authorized to do so.

#### **IV. WORK-RELATED USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- A. Social media applications, profiles, identities, logon IDs and usernames may not use AFSA’s name without prior approval from the Executive Director.
- B. Blogs and social networking sites are public and searchable. Any posting referencing AFSA or your affiliation with AFSA should not contain information that you would not be comfortable seeing on the evening news or showing to your parent, spouse or children.
- C. If you are participating in an online community and commenting or publishing on topics related to our school, identify yourself as an employee of AFSA. Be sure to write in the first person. You must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of AFSA. When necessary, use disclaimers such as “*The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent AFSA's positions, strategies or opinions.*” What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.
- D. AFSA employees should not be cited or referenced without their approval.
- E. No employee may publish or post any statement (including a photograph or other visual image) about AFSA that damages the reputation of AFSA if (a) the employee knows the statement is false or reasonably should have known the statement was false; or (b) the employee is acting maliciously and without any legitimate purpose protected by law; or (c) implies affiliation or endorsements by AFSA of employee’s work. No employee may publish or post anything that a student or a student’s family or another employee of AFSA would reasonably consider to be hostile, offensive, threatening, or intimidating.

#### **V. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- A. The decision of whether or not to use social media for personal use, outside of work hours, is left to the discretion of the individual AFSA employee.
- B. AFSA may take appropriate action when it becomes aware of, or reasonably suspects, conduct or communication on social media that adversely affects the workplace, impedes their ability to do their job, or violates professional codes of ethics or other laws.
- C. Employees will be held responsible for disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information or data that violates the privacy rights, or other rights, of a third party, or for the content of anything communicated by the employee on any public online social media.

#### **VI. RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Employees who engage in the use of online social media are expected to adhere to all applicable AFSA policies at all times. This policy is in addition to, and not in place of, those other policies.
- B. When you choose to go public with your activities and/or opinions, you are legally responsible for your commentary. Individuals may be held personally liable for any content found to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. For these reasons, you should use common sense and exercise caution with regard to content, exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, illegal activities and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
- C. Any violation of this policy or other AFSA policies while blogging or while using other online social media, even outside of work, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

***Legal References:*** Minnesota Administrative Rule 8710.2100 (Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers )  
*See* Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2001 (CIPA)