

Pattonville Social Media Guidelines

In the education field, social media can be a tool for communication, two-way engagement and for teaching students how to navigate the world in an increasingly online, global society. Social media is designed to connect people - not just to push content out to an audience. This engagement occurs in real-time, 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week. The purpose and nature of social media should be taken into account when an employee considers its use for communication purposes and when developing a social media platform.

Use of social media in the school or district context should be used in a manner that preserves professional boundaries between staff, students, parents and community members. Staff members should follow the policies outlined in EHB (Technology Usage) and EHBC (Data Governance and Security) when using district electronic resources as well as social media as well as any other relevant district policy.

Rules governing the use of social media by district employees:

- When possible, use district-provided or district-sanctioned online media or tools (i.e., email, Google suite, SeeSaw, etc.) for teaching, collaboration and communication.
- When there is a compelling reason to use other resources outside district-provided media, the use of social media should be approved by the employee's principal or supervisor. Such approval would occur if use of the social media platform were determined to be necessary or beneficial and the communication is related to the class or other school/district activity or program. The approved social media platform will be considered district-sponsored and must be professional and conform to all district policies, regulations and procedures. The employee will be required to provide his/her principal or supervisor access to the social media platform he/she is using, including username and password. This username and password should not be shared beyond anyone but the employee and his/her principal or supervisor.
- Employees wishing to use a social media platform will develop a plan for its use prior to it being approved by their principal or supervisor (see Social Media Planning Worksheet). The plan will be presented to the employee's principal or supervisor as part of the approval process.
- All communications should be professional in nature and school related. All electronic communication, including social media, between staff and students, parents or other community members should be written as a professional representing the Pattonville School District. Word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter should be courteous and model the highest standards of professional integrity.
- Content on social media, including posts by district personnel or comments by followers, should not violate any provision of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or any policy or regulation of the district governing the confidentiality and release of information about identifiable students. Employees are prohibited from posting student photos, videos or names/information on any media platform if the student has a media exclusion in PowerSchool.
- Content should be posted and monitored daily by the school employee responsible for the social media platform. Rules for comments/interaction on social media will be posted and visible (see below for Commenting Rules). The school employee responsible for the social media platform will respond to any comment that provides false information with factual information or remove

any comment that violates the commenting rules as soon as possible and will keep a copy of any removed content (screenshot).

- Staff members who wish to use social media as part of class instruction must also obtain written permission from the parents/guardians of students who will be involved in the project.
- Staff members who use social media as part of class instruction will include instruction on the responsible and appropriate use of social media appropriate for the age/grade level of the student.
- Staff members should not friend or accept friend requests from current Pattonville students (except their own family members) on Facebook or other social media platforms. Students may join groups or follow accounts that are open and accessible to the public or join group pages approved by the employee's principal or supervisor. (Facebook pages are open and visible to the public, even non-registered Facebook users, while groups can be invitation only and closed to the public). See below for a response staff members can use for students or parents who try to friend them on their personal Facebook page:
"If you are a student or parent requesting to be my friend on Facebook, please do not be surprised or offended if I ignore your request. As an employee of the Pattonville School District, policy discourages me from "friending" students or parents on my personal Facebook page. I would encourage you to friend/follow our school and the Pattonville School District Facebook page."
- When staff members communicate with parents, students and community members as part of their professional duties or when using district technology resources or social media, there is no expectation of privacy. Communication between staff and students, parents or other community members should remain transparent and open. All electronic communication between staff and students, parents or other community members should be considered a matter of record, part of the district archives and/or may be accessible by others, including the media, law enforcement or court system.
- District-sponsored Facebook pages or other social media platforms should be open and public.
- Employees using social media are responsible for ensuring any information they post is factual and accurate.
- Employees using social media for school-related matters will use accounts or applications separate from their personal accounts or applications. Accounts should be set up using the employee's work email.

Pattonville Social Media Planning Worksheet

Those wishing to create a social media account with any relation to Pattonville needs to complete out the form at bit.ly/PSDSocialMediaPlanApp. A copy will be sent to Greg Southard, director of technology services, and Kelly Gordon, chief communications officer, for approval.

Commenting Guidelines

(To be customized according to social media platform)

Welcome to the [INSERT NAME OF PLATFORM] sponsored by the [INSERT SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT HERE]. This page is intended to provide information and engage in open and respectful dialogue that is appropriate to the educational environment and fans of all ages. Please visit our official homepage at [INSERT HOMEPAGE URL].

Comments are welcome as a means of sharing experiences, suggesting improvements, responding to polls/questions or engaging in the conversation. Comments will be reviewed by the author of this platform. To ensure that exchanges are informative, respectful and lawful, we may hide or remove comments that are:

- Off Topic. We will exclude comments not related to the subject.
- Spam. Comments focused on selling a product or service will not be allowed.
- Personal Attacks. If you disagree with a post, we'd like to hear from you. We ask that you refrain from personal attacks or being disrespectful of others.
- Illegal. Laws that govern use of copyrights, trade secrets, student and staff confidentiality, etc., will be followed. The district will delete comments that: suggest or encourage illegal activity or activities that violate school behavior guides; pertain to personnel issue with the district, a school or staff member; or relate to student discipline issue or private student matter.
- Language. Comments including but not limited to: profane or provocative language, hateful, racially or ethnically offensive or derogatory content, threats, obscene or sexually explicit language will be removed.
- Not factual. Blatantly inaccurate information will not be allowed. False information will be removed and factual information will be posted.

Notes:

- Any hidden or deleted comments will recorded and archived by the administrator of the social media platform. Individuals will not be notified if a comment is hidden or deleted.
- Employees of the Pattonville School District may have personal Facebook pages. Don't be surprised or offended if your request to "friend" them is ignored. District policy encourages staff to keep their personal lives personal.