



GALVESTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Social Media and Networking Student User Agreement

The Social Media User Agreement is a set of procedures in regards to social media and technology as it is used by students at Galveston ISD (GISD). It is intended to address the activity of social media use and how it impacts the district and its schools, the district's students and their families, employees, or other third parties who deal with the district.

Social networking, for purposes of this user agreement, includes all types of online postings, communications, interactions with other users on the Internet, and cell phone usage including, but not limited to:

- Online posting or sharing of text, pictures, audio, video or interactive media where it can be viewed or heard by others;
- Use of social networking sites (such as Facebook, MySpace, or LinkedIn), blogs and other on-line journals and diaries, bulletin boards, chat rooms, instant messaging software, microblogging (Twitter), personal homepages and websites, video blogging or sharing (including YouTube or publicly accessible webcam transmissions), commentary on blogs or websites;
- Allowing and/or denying access to one's online social network by "friending" or "defriending" other users;
- Permitting or removing postings by others where a student can control the content of postings, such as on a personal social networking profile, blog, or personal website;
- Peer-to-peer cell phone text messaging that can be forwarded to others

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recently enacted policies to protect students further from cyberbullying and sexting. Cyberbullying and sexting falls under the context of social media and networking.

Cyberbullying, as defined in the Student Code of Conduct, refers to the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation. It is defined as the use of the

Internet, cell phones or other devices to send, post or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person.

This may include, but is not limited to: continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further to contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages or emails to the victims; posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target, which is determined to have a material and substantial interference with school activities or with the rights of students and teachers.

Sexting is defined as using a cell phone or other personal communication device to send text or email messages or possessing text or email messages containing images reasonably interpreted as indecent or sexually suggestive while at school or at a school related function. In addition to any disciplinary action, phones will be confiscated and students should be aware that any images suspected to violate criminal laws may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

Students who engage in social networking should be mindful that their online postings, communications, and other interactions, even if done off premises and while not in school, as they could have an adverse and negative effect on other students and GISD staff members.

To reduce that risk, please observe the following social networking policies and guidelines:

- Social networking is subject to all TEA and GISD policies, including the Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook.
- Complaints are to be resolved through school channels, including speaking to fellow students, teachers, or school administration rather than posting complaints on-line or via cell phone texting. Please use available resources and follow the protocol set by the Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook.
- Any perceived instances of cyberbullying and/or sexting by another student should be reported immediately to a parent, teacher or GISD administrator.

Please note, the following activities are prohibited by this Social Media and Networking User Agreement:

- Do not defame or otherwise discredit fellow students and/or teachers
- Cyberbullying or sexting as defined above
- Do not disclose personal or contact information, or post photographs or video of students without prior permission of their parent or guardian
- Do not disclose personal or contact information, or post photographs or video of staff without prior permission
- Do not identify GISD staff or students without permission
- Do not use any district or school logo, trademark or proprietary graphics, or photographs or video of the school's premises or programs without given consent
- Do not accept "friend" requests from district employees; any instances in which a GISD employee "friends" a student should be immediately reported and only allowed in particular cases in which the school administrator allows permission to do so beforehand.

The User Agreement applies to social networking by all students. That includes social networking while at school or away from school in instances when it involves other GISD students, while on or off campus, while using the school or personal electronic resources, and whether or not the student posts anonymously or using a pseudonym.

Any posting, text or commentary via a social media tool or outlet is subject to disciplinary action per the Student Handbook should it become an issue on a GISD campus. Disciplinary action will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Student signature

Parent/Guardian signature