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2 **RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

3
4 **ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES**

5
6 **SOCIAL MEDIA**

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8 Richfield Public Schools recognizes the continually growing presence and potential
9 social media has in our daily experiences and educational settings. The purpose of this
10 document is to guide social media practices and outline specific expectations that are
11 designed to increase the effectiveness of social media in our educational settings.

12
13 **A. GENERAL STATEMENT**

14
15 Information produced, shared, retrieved, or highlighted through the use of social
16 media reaches a magnified audience and has a significant level of impact. As an
17 ever-emerging medium, social media reaches its audiences and establishes its
18 impacts in new ways on a continual basis.

19
20 Richfield Public Schools expects that when staff and students use social media in
21 the educational setting, they maintain the highest ethical and educational
22 standards. These guidelines are designed to create an atmosphere of honesty,
23 individual accountability, and safety. Failure to meet or follow these guidelines
24 may result in professional intervention and/ or disciplinary action.

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26 **B. DEFINITIONS**

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28 1. *Social media*: Social media is defined as any electronic communication
29 program, application, or network that allows communication between and
30 among multiple individuals, allowing individuals to retrieve, share,
31 exchange, and produce information, or allowing individuals to highlight
32 information, whether they created it or not.

33
34 **C. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

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36 The following guidelines are established to meet the expectations in the general
37 statement provisions set forth above. These general guidelines apply to staff and
38 students engaging in the use of social media on school sites or at school-
39 sponsored events and/or on District-provided technology and technology
40 systems. They may also apply to social media that impacts the educational or
41 work environment in a way that impedes any person's use or enjoyment of the
42 environment or causes disruption or harm.

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44 1. Treat all information and ideas contained in social media as being fully
45 accessible to the public.
46

- 1 2. Treat all information and ideas contained in social media as being subject
2 to all of the District's policies, specifically including discipline, anti-bullying,
3 anti-harassment, and internet usage policies.
- 4
- 5 3. Treat all information and ideas contained in social media as if it is or could
6 be permanent public information that represents the staff member or
7 student now and in the future.
- 8
- 9 4. Staff and students must self-identify and may not misrepresent
10 themselves using another person's or organization's identity.
- 11
- 12 5. Staff and students must follow copyright regulations and give appropriate
13 credit to the source of the information.
- 14
- 15 6. Post and/or link only appropriate and relevant information that does not
16 violate any District policy relating to the treatment of other individuals.
- 17
- 18 7. Respond to others with respect and avoid comments that may be hurtful.
- 19
- 20 8. Communicate without the use of profanity, obscenities, or threatening
21 language.
- 22
- 23 9. Only accept invitations to share information from people you know and
24 trust.
- 25
- 26 10. Whenever possible, consider utilizing privacy settings to control access to
27 your information and ideas.
- 28
- 29 11. Keep passwords and other personal information secure and monitor and
30 track their disclosure.
- 31
- 32 12. Notify a staff member immediately when coming across inappropriate
33 material, or material that is disrespectful or discriminatory in content or
34 language, or is in violation of any District policy.
- 35

36 **D. GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

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38 The decision to make personal use of social media is left to the discretion of each
39 employee. The District does not affirmatively monitor employee use of social
40 media; however, it may take appropriate responsive action when it becomes
41 aware of, or suspects, conduct or communication on social media that adversely
42 affects the workplace or educational environment or violates applicable
43 professional codes of ethics, law, or District policy. Employees will be held
44 responsible for their disclosure, whether purposeful or not, of confidential or
45 private information; information that violates the rights or privacy of individuals or
46 of a third party, or for the content of anything communicated by the employee on
47 social media. For that reason, employees shall observe the following when using
48 social media:

- 1
2 1. Employees must consider their role as a school employee before posting
3 or communicating content that is obscene, profane, vulgar, harassing,
4 threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory, or content that discusses or
5 encourages any illegal or inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs,
6 sexual behavior and/or sexual harassment or content that violates District
7 policy, professional ethics, or law.
8
- 9 2. Views expressed on personal social media are the employee's alone and
10 do not necessarily reflect the view of the District. Employees cannot act as
11 an official spokesperson for the District or post comments as a
12 representative of the District, except as authorized by the superintendent
13 or the superintendent's designee. If an employee chooses to personally
14 post on social media any commentary related to the District, the employee
15 assumes all risk associated with the posting. Employees may not state or
16 suggest that their personal messages are endorsed by the District.
17
- 18 3. Employees may not disclose information on social media that is private,
19 confidential or proprietary to the District, its students, or employees or that
20 is protected by data privacy laws.
21
- 22 4. The District recognizes that student groups or members of the public
23 create and use social media representing students or groups within the
24 District. When employees, including coaches/advisors, choose to join or
25 engage with these social media tools, they do so as employees of the
26 District, and thus the guidelines outlined above apply.
27
- 28 5. Employees have a responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-
29 student relationships at all times. This includes exercising good judgment
30 and professionalism in any interpersonal relationship with students, for the
31 safety of the students online, and responding as required as mandated
32 reporters when applicable. Employees are strongly discouraged from
33 engaging in any social media interaction with students, unless it is through
34 a social media account set up solely to share educational or school-
35 related information. If an employee does engage in a social media
36 interaction with a student, the employee must maintain professional
37 boundaries with students on social media. Employees may not engage in
38 communications with students that give the impression of being peer-to-
39 peer communications, unless the employee and student are related.
40 Employees must not have extensive social involvement or develop
41 personal or private relationships with individual students through social
42 media, unless they are related.
43

E. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

44 When using social media using District resources, including technology and/or
45 wifi, or during the school day, or in a manner that impacts the work or educational
46 environment and may be disruptive or cause harm, students and staff are subject
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1 to all disciplinary policies. Disciplinary consequences are assigned as related to
2 the severity, frequency, and/ or extenuating circumstances of the event. Primary
3 consideration is given to those consequences for students that are educational in
4 nature and designed to bring about the desired change in behavior. The District
5 reserves its right to consider the full range of disciplinary consequences outlined
6 in District policy and/or Minnesota Statute should the circumstances warrant a
7 more stringent disciplinary approach.
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9 **F. RESERVATION OF RIGHTS**

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11 The District reserves the right to remove individual social media site access from
12 users, as well as content posted in our educational setting and the District social
13 media sites that contain ideas or information that:
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- 15 1. Provides an unauthorized commercial endorsement.
- 16
17 2. Presents illicit, pornographic, discriminatory, unlawful, misleading, untrue,
18 or malicious content. This includes content intended to or that may bully,
19 demean, intimidate, or harass and content that uses ideas or information
20 in an inappropriate manner.
- 21
22 3. Advocates illegal or illicit activity.
- 23
24 4. Is repeatedly posted information identical or very similar content in a
25 counter-productive manner, including aggressive promotion (spam).
26
- 27 5. Uses ideas or information that are not attributable to a specific source or
28 uses the ideas or information from a specific source without required
29 approval or source citation.
- 30
31 6. Provides little to no academic value.

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37 2024