SUBJECT: STAFF USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES (Acceptable Use Policy)

The Board of Education will provide staff with access to various computerized information resources through the District's computer system (DCS hereafter), consisting of software, hardware, computer networks, and electronic communication systems. This may include access to electronic mail, so-called "online services," and the "Internet." It may also include the opportunity for some staff to have independent access to the DCS from their home or other remote locations. All use of the DCS, including independent use off school premises, shall be subject to this policy and accompanying regulations.

The Board encourages staff to make use of the DCS to explore educational topics, conduct research, and contact others in the educational world. The Board anticipates that staff access to various computerized information resources will both expedite and enhance the performance of tasks associated with their positions and assignments. Toward that end, the Board directs the Superintendent or his/her designee(s) to provide staff with training in the proper and effective use of the DCS.

Staff use of the DCS is conditioned upon written agreement by the staff member that use of the DCS will conform to the requirements of this policy and any regulations adopted to ensure acceptable use of the DCS. All such agreements shall be kept on file in the District office.

Generally, the same standards of acceptable staff conduct that apply to any aspect of job performance shall apply to use of the DCS. Employees are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with applicable District policies and regulations governing the behavior of school staff. Employee use of email must comply with District policy 6471: Use of Email in the District.

This policy does not attempt to articulate all required and/or acceptable uses of the DCS; nor is it the intention of this policy to define all inappropriate usage. Administrative regulations will further define general guidelines of appropriate staff conduct and use, as well as proscribed behavior.

District staff shall also adhere to the laws, policies, and rules governing computers, including, but not limited to, copyright laws, rights of software publishers, license agreements, and rights of privacy created by federal and state law.

Staff members who engage in unacceptable use may lose access to the DCS and may be subject to further discipline under the law and in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements. Legal action may be initiated against a staff member who willfully, maliciously, or unlawfully damages or destroys property of the District.

Guidelines for Acceptable Use of District-Owned Hardware and Software

1. **Respectful Communication**
    - Use district hardware and software to engage in professional, respectful communication with colleagues, students, families, and community members.
    - Avoid language, images, or behaviors that are discriminatory, harassing, or offensive.
2. **Equitable Access**
    - District-owned devices and licensed software are to be used to promote equitable learning opportunities for all students.
    - Do not use technology in ways that create barriers to access or exclude individuals or groups.

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SUBJECT: STAFF USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES (Cont'd.)

3. **Accessibility Compliance**
   - When creating digital content (e.g., documents, presentations, online materials), staff should follow accessibility best practices (such as alt text, captions, and readable formats) to support individuals with disabilities.
   - Staff should use district-approved accessibility tools when appropriate.
4. **Cultural Sensitivity**
   - Ensure that digital resources, instructional tools, and online communications reflect cultural sensitivity and inclusivity.
   - Avoid stereotypes, biased representations, or exclusionary practices when using technology.
5. **Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments**
   - Use technology to foster safe spaces that value diversity, encourage positive participation, and support student well-being.
   - Do not use district devices or accounts to share content that undermines inclusivity or safety.
6. **Professional Use of Online Platforms**
   - When participating in online forums, learning platforms, or video conferences using district equipment or accounts, maintain professionalism and model inclusive digital citizenship.
   - Ensure all participants feel welcome and respected in digital interactions.
7. **Privacy and Dignity**
   - Protect the privacy and dignity of students and staff when using technology.
   - Do not post, share, or display information, images, or recordings that could embarrass, exclude, or harm individuals.
8. **Appropriate Use of Assistive and Instructional Technologies**
   - Support diverse learning needs by responsibly integrating approved assistive technologies into instruction.
   - Refrain from disabling, restricting, or misusing accessibility or inclusion-focused tools.

Social Media Use by Employees

The School District recognizes the value of teacher and professional staff inquiry, investigation and communication using new technology tools to enhance student learning experiences. The School District also realizes its obligations to teach and ensure responsible and safe use of these new technologies. Social media, including social networking sites, have great potential to connect people around the globe and enhance communication. Therefore, the Board of Education encourages the use of District-approved social media tools and the exploration of new and emerging technologies to supplement the range of communication and educational services.

For purposes of this Policy, the definition of **public social media networks or Social Networking Sites (SNS)** are defined to include: Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media generally available to the school district community which do not fall within the District's electronic technology network (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, blog sites, etc.). The definition of **District-approved password-protected social media tools** are those that fall within the District's electronic technology network or which the District has approved for educational use. Within these internal forums, the District has greater authority and ability to protect minors from inappropriate content and can limit public access within these internal forums.

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SUBJECT: STAFF USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES (Cont'd.)

The use of social media (whether public or internal) can generally be defined as Official District Use, Professional/Instructional Use and Personal Use. The definitions, uses and responsibilities will be further defined and differentiated in the Administrative Regulation. The School District takes no position on an employee's decision to participate in the use of social media or SNS for personal use on personal time. However, personal use of these media during District time or on District-owned equipment is ***allowed on a limited basis***. In addition, employees are encouraged to maintain the highest levels of professionalism. They have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks, including requirements for mandated reporting and compliance with all applicable District Policies and Regulations.

Guidelines and Restrictions for Posting to District Official Online Platforms
The District recognizes the importance of maintaining a consistent, professional, and inclusive presence across all official online platforms (website, social media, newsletters, and other digital outlets). The following guidelines and restrictions are established to ensure that all content posted on official platforms reflects the District's mission, vision, and values.

1. Authorization
- All postings to official district platforms must be approved by the Superintendent or a designated administrator before publication.
- Only authorized staff may independently post to official district accounts.

2. Content Standards
- Posts must be accurate, professional, and respectful.
- Content should promote positive communication, student achievement, district events, or community engagement.
- Information must align with District policies, strategic goals, and legal requirements.
- Content must be free of political endorsements, personal opinions, or commercial advertising.
- All digital content must be created and shared in formats that are accessible to individuals with disabilities (e.g., using alt text for images, captions for videos, readable document structures), ensuring equal access for all staff, students, and community members.

3. Privacy and Confidentiality
- Student and staff privacy must be protected in accordance with FERPA, state law, and District policy.
- Photos, videos, or personally identifiable information of students may only be posted with appropriate consent.
- Confidential information (e.g., grades, discipline, health data, or personnel matters) must never be posted.

4. Restrictions
- Posts containing discriminatory, harassing, defamatory, or offensive language or images are strictly prohibited.
- Content that promotes violence, illegal activity, or unsafe behaviors will not be permitted.
- No political campaigning, lobbying, or personal advocacy is allowed on district platforms.
- Use of copyrighted materials requires proper attribution and permissions.

5. Tone and Representation
- All posts should reflect the District's role as an educational institution and maintain a positive, inclusive, and student-centered tone.
- District accounts must not be used for personal gain, private business, or non-district purposes.
- Grammar, spelling, and professionalism are required in every post.

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SUBJECT: STAFF USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES (Cont'd.)

6. Emergency and Crisis Communication

- Posts regarding emergencies, safety alerts, or crisis updates will only be made by the Superintendent or designee in coordination with law enforcement and emergency officials.

7. Accountability

- The Superintendent or designee retains final authority over all content.
- Posts that violate these guidelines may be removed immediately.
- Staff who fail to comply with these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action under District policy.

Privacy Rights

Staff data files and electronic storage areas shall remain District property, subject to District control and inspection. The Computer Coordinator may access all such files and communication without prior notice to ensure system integrity and that users are complying with requirements of this policy and accompanying regulations. Staff should **NOT** expect that information stored on the DCS will be private.

Implementation

Administrative regulations will be developed to implement the terms of this policy, addressing general parameters of acceptable staff conduct as well as prohibited activities so as to provide appropriate guidelines for employee use of the DCS.

NOTE: Refer also to Policy #8271 -- Children's Internet Protection Act: Internet Content Filtering/Safety Policy

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