

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

I. Statement of Policy

The Waterville Central School District (“District”) recognizes the importance of social media as a tool for communication, engagement, and outreach. The District shall maintain an official website as well as official District social media accounts as the primary source of online content.

The Superintendent has sole authority to approve the creation and use of District-affiliated social media accounts. Only under rare circumstances will the Superintendent authorize social media accounts to supplement communication efforts. Each authorized account will have a designated Site Administrator, which may include administrators, teachers, support staff, coaches, advisors, or other District-affiliated individuals. Any non-District personnel acting as a Site Administrator must complete annual training and sign an agreement acknowledging their responsibilities.

All use of District-affiliated social media must align with the District’s Mission, Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy, and Education Law 2-D regarding data privacy and security.

II. Definition of Social Media

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes online platforms and digital communication tools used to share information, collaborate, or engage with the community. This includes but is not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, TikTok, Threads)
- Video and image-sharing platforms (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat)
- Blogging and discussion forums
- Messaging apps and collaboration tools

District-affiliated social media accounts serve as an extension of the District’s official communications and must uphold professional standards.

III. Guidelines for District-Affiliated Social Media Use

A. Site Administrator Responsibilities

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1. Site Administrators must ensure that all posted content is professional, appropriate, and aligned with District policies.
 2. District social media accounts should be used solely for school-related communication and must not contain personal opinions, political endorsements, or commercial promotions.
 3. Content must not include personally identifiable student information unless it qualifies as directory information, and the student's parent/guardian has not opted out of disclosure per District Regulation 7500.1.
 4. All District-affiliated social media accounts are subject to regular administrative monitoring and must provide access credentials to the Superintendent or designee.
- B. Staff Use of Social Media for Work-Related Purposes
1. Employees engaging in work-related social media use should maintain separate professional and personal accounts. Personal email addresses should not be used for official District communications.
 2. One-on-one communication with students through social media is prohibited. Any digital communication with students must be conducted using District-approved email or learning management systems.
 3. Employees should not establish personal relationships with students via personal social media accounts unless they have a recognized adult leadership role in a community-based program known to the student's parent/guardian.
- C. Expectations of Professionalism
1. All social media communications must be respectful, professional, and appropriate.
 2. Posts, comments, or shared content that would be considered inappropriate on school property or at a school-sponsored event is prohibited on District-affiliated social media accounts.
 3. Employees should avoid engaging in public disputes or arguments on District social media platforms.

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IV. Personal Social Media Use

While employees have the right to use personal social media accounts, they should be mindful that their public statements and actions may reflect on the District.

Employees must:

1. Avoid misrepresenting the District or speaking on its behalf unless authorized.
2. Refrain from posting confidential or sensitive student or District information.
3. Maintain professional boundaries with students and avoid direct interactions on personal accounts.
4. Exercise caution when discussing work-related matters online, as social media posts can be shared widely and impact professional reputation.
5. Understand that any public social media activity that violates District policies or disrupts school operations may be subject to disciplinary review.

V. Privacy and Monitoring

- Employees have no expectation of privacy when using District-affiliated social media accounts.
- The District reserves the right to monitor, edit, or remove content that violates policy.
- Any suspected breaches of student data privacy, security, or inappropriate content must be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor.

VI. Enforcement and Consequences

- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with District policies, regulations, applicable laws, and collective bargaining agreements.
- Any misconduct involving students may also be subject to mandatory reporting requirements under state law.

POLICY

SUPPORT OPERATIONS

5305

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Waterville Central School District

Adopted: 5/14/19*, 04/29/25*