Operational Services

Exhibit - Letter to Parents/Guardians About Disruptive Social Media Apps; Dangers

On District or School letterhead

Date

Re: Disruptive Social Media Apps; Dangers

Dear Families:

Staying on top of social medial trends is important for families. The District wants you to know that the following social media apps have the potential to disrupt the school environment by becoming a platform for bullying, unlawful behaviors, and other dangers:

- *Anonymous hyperlocal* social media apps, e.g., *YikYak* and *Jodel*, present safety and security concerns for our students. Anonymous hyperlocal apps use GPS on cell phones to target groups in specific areas and allow people to interact anonymously.
- *Temporary* social media apps, e.g., *Snapchat,* often present a false belief of anonymity. Temporary apps allow people to send messages and images that self-destruct after a set window of time.
- Certain *gaming* apps, e.g., *Roblox* and *Fortnite*, may present safety risks for our students. Gaming apps can present opportunities for hackers to launch phishing attacks and spread malware, and in-app chats may allow players to chat with friends and strangers.

Children need to understand that their online choices are important. Content never truly goes away and no one online is anonymous. Law enforcement agencies have the ability to pinpoint users and content creators, and they do investigate crimes involving the Internet and social media app usage.

The District encourages you to review the resources below and talk with your children. Let's partner together to help children understand how their digital footprints affect their and others' futures. As you discuss this topic with your child, please remind your child how to report his or her concerns:

1. Tell your child to take a screen shot (if possible) or video (when screenshot not possible) of the content and show you or another trusted adult. Always encourage open conversations about what is happening online. When age-appropriate, discuss that possession and forwarding of sexted images violates federal and State child pornography and sexual abuse material laws.
2. Use the reporting mechanisms within the social media apps.
3. When a situation begins to disrupt your child's education, report it to your child's school.

Resources about Social Media Apps and Protecting Your Child Online

www.commonsensemedia.org, discusses apps, movies, and more. Type in the app you want to learn more about, and this website will summarize it for you.

www.consumer.ftc.gov/topics/protecting-kids-online, contains resources for adults seeking to help children make safe and responsible online choices.

Sincerely,

Building Principal

May 2024
February 2026