

NYCSD
2026-27
SOCIAL MEDIA
GUIDELINES

Northern York County School District

Social Media Guidelines for Students

Introduction:

Northern York County School District (NYCSD) is providing all students with access to an education and co/extracurricular activities that prepare them to succeed in college and careers. These Social Media Guidelines are in accordance with, and support of NYCSD Board Policy numbers 815 and 816, pertaining to “Acceptable Use of Internet” and “Social Media”, respectively. Part of being a successful citizen is understanding that social media and digital communication are essential parts of our world today. It is important to recognize that access to information can result in tremendous advantages, but it can also create new responsibilities of which students should be aware.

Social Media is any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including social networks, blogs, texts, emails, photo sharing platforms, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis.

Create the Digital Image You Want

Your digital image says a great deal about you. Consider that following **before** you post anything on social media:

- A **digital footprint** is the reputation you create online.
- Online actions leave a permanent record and remain online, even if you click “delete.”
- Be thoughtful about what you share online and consider how it would appear to family, friends, colleges, and future employers.
- Many colleges, employers, and branches of the military search social media before making admissions and hiring decisions.
 - You need to recognize that once you post or send something electronically you have lost complete control over who can and may see it.
 - Assume ANYONE in the world can and may see it.
 - Think carefully BEFORE you post or send it.
- Use social media as a tool to demonstrate your interests in **positive** ways.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else’s identity.
- Take a few extra minutes to think about whether a post will be hurtful or embarrassing or whether it could negatively affect a future opportunity.

STAND BEHIND YOUR WORDS

- Always take responsibility for the content you post in all social media environments.
- While you may think that using a name may prevent posts from becoming part of your footprint, there are still ways to link that information to you (for example, through an Internet IP address or other distinguishing information linking posts.)
- Be your best self online – post accurate information and be accountable for what you say.
- Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas are recommended. However, be sure to read the entire article prior to linking to it to insure that all information is appropriate for a school setting.

POST RESPONSIBLY – BE Mindful of Your Audience

Using social media academically or during a co/extracurricular activity is an extension of your classroom, activity or team environment.

- Only post or tweet during a class, activity, practice or contest when you have permission from the teacher, advisor, or coach.
- Never post any information that would violate NYCSD Board Policies, the Code of Student Conduct and/or state or federal laws.
- When you use social media for academic purposes, such as for a school assignment, treat the platform as a digital extension of your classroom.
- The same rules apply online as they do at school.
- Do your own work!
 - Do not use other people's intellectual property without their permission.
 - It is a violation of copyright law to copy and paste other's thoughts.
 - When paraphrasing another's' idea(s) be sure to cite your source with the URL.
 - It is good practice to hyperlink to your sources
 - Be aware that pictures may also be protected under copyright laws. Verify you have permission to use the image or it is under Creative Commons attribution.
- All Social Media posts should be well written. Following writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work, be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.

Consider the Consequences to Your Online Actions

Personal use of social media may have an effect at school.

- Sometimes, personal social media use, including off-hours use, may result in disruption at school and the school may need to get involved.
- This could include disciplinary action such as a parent conference or suspension. In situations where it is believe a law has been broken, disciplinary action could even take the form of charges being filed with the police.

- It is important to remember that infractions outlined in the NYCSD Code of Student Conduct prohibiting certain types of communication also apply to electronic communication.
- To be safe, be in control of what you do online, even if it is during personal time.
- It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.

Protect Yourself

There are many ways to protect yourself online.

- Only accept friends' requests from people you know.
- It is important to remember not to:
 - Post too many identifying details about yourself (such as where you live, social security number, last names, phone numbers, exact birthdates, and pictures).
 - Publicize confidential information about yourself or anyone else that is not considered public knowledge.
 - Reveal information that can be potentially dangerous or compromise your, or someone else's, identity in some way.
- Do not share passwords with friends and be sure that your computers do not automatically save passwords.

Adjust your privacy settings appropriately.

- Privacy settings are automatically set by social media providers governing who can see your posts, how information is linked, and what data is available to the public.
- Each social media platform has different privacy setting defaults and some change those settings without making it obvious to you.
- As a user of social media, you should determine whether to change to default settings to make access to postings more private.

Take Cyber bullying Seriously

Cyber bullying takes many forms.

Cyber bullying is the use of electronic technologies to hurt or harm other people, including students, teammates, coaches, advisors, teachers, and administrators. Examples include:

- Sending offensive text messages or emails;
- Posting statements that are not true and create rumors; or
- Circulating embarrassing photos online.

Sometimes, it may be difficult to draw the line between a harmless joke and one which goes too far and becomes hurtful. Therefore, if you are unsure if a post is appropriate, seek the advice of a trusted adult.

Report cyber bullying and get help.

If you are being cyber bullied or hear about/observe someone else being cyber bullied, report the behavior and get help.

- You can tell a parent, school staff, another adult family member, or a trusted adult.
- You can also complete and submit a bullying form via the School District Website. The form is located under Quick Links on the webpage for each school within the District.
- If not adult is available and you or someone else is in danger, call 911.

Students who cyberbully another individual will be subject to school discipline.

Know what to do.

It is important

- Not to respond to, retaliate to, or forward any harassing, intimidating, or bullying content.
- “De-friend,” block, or remove people who send inappropriate content.
- It may also be a good idea to save harassing messages, as this evidence could be important to show an adult if the behavior continues.
- If the behavior is school-related, print out the messages and provide them to the school when you report the incident (do not email them to anyone).

Text Guidelines

Words and/or phrases that should never appear anywhere on your social networking pages (regardless of who posted them) or in the emails you send, include (but not limited to):

- Any words or phrases considered to be harassing and/or discriminatory in nature on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.
- Any demeaning or disrespectful statements about or threats to any third party.
- Sexually explicit and/or profane language/
- Words or phrases to describe excessive social activities (e.g. partying, boozing and smoking are not appropriated topics for students.)
- Words or phrases you would not want attributed directly to you should they be released publicly (e.g. newspaper, television story).

Only Text/Post (which included sending, publishing, tweeting, retweeting, etc.) information and sentiments that are positive, supportive, inspirational, and encouraging.

Photo Guidelines

Examples of inappropriate or offensive behaviors posted on social networking sites may include (but are not limited to) depictions or presentation of the following, regardless to who posted them:

- Hazing, an activity that violates the NYCSD Code of Student Conduct.
- Use of alcohol and drugs, regardless of age.
- Lewd or lascivious behavior including sexually explicit pictures.
- Photos meant to demean the individuals include in the photo.
- Any photos you would not want publicly released on television or in a newspaper.
- **What to do.** If you receive or become award of inappropriate photos (via text, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Barstool, etc.) report it to a trusted adult (Parent, teacher, principal, advisor, coach, etc.) as soon as possible.

NYCSD Social Media Guidelines for Students – Signature Page

I have read the NYCSD Social Media Guidelines for Students and acknowledge that:

Students who do not abide by these guidelines may lose their opportunity to take part in NYCSD activities and/or access to the future use of online tools. They may be subjected to disciplinary actions including suspension or removal for the classroom, co/extracurricular activities and/or athletic teams as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. In situations where it is believed a law has been broken, disciplinary action could even take the form of charges being filed with the police.

Student's Name -Print

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature