Digital Communications and Social Media Policy

Purpose

Digital communications and social media help Pacific Ridge School build community, celebrate student achievement, share learning experiences, and advance the School's mission and values.

This policy establishes expectations for how members of the Pacific Ridge community engage online and represent the School in PRS digital spaces. This policy is intended to promote respectful communication, protect privacy, support student well-being, and ensure that our online interactions reflect the values that define our community.

This policy applies to students, parents and guardians, faculty and staff, alumni, volunteers, and any individual who participates in School-related digital spaces.

Community Standards

Pacific Ridge School believes that digital spaces should reflect the same mission, values, and standards that guide our community on and off campus.

In digital spaces, members of the PRS community are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and constructively.
- Consider the impact of content before posting or sharing.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and perspectives of others.
- Verify information before sharing it.
- Contribute positively to online communities.

The following behaviors are inconsistent with the expectations of the Pacific Ridge School community:

- Harassment, discrimination, or hate speech
- Intimidation or threatening behavior
- Cyberbullying
- Sharing private or identifying information without permission
- Impersonation or misrepresentation of another person or organization
- Knowingly sharing false or misleading information that may cause harm to individuals or the community

Pacific Ridge School reserves the right to moderate or remove content that is inconsistent with this policy or the School's mission and values.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Members of the Pacific Ridge community are expected to respect the privacy of students, families, employees, and fellow community members. Private, confidential, or protected information may not be shared without appropriate permission.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Personal contact information
- Student information
- Private communications
- Schedules and locations
- Medical or personal information
- Internal School information not intended for public distribution

Community members are also expected to respect copyright, trademark, and intellectual property protections.

Student Media and Photography

Storytelling is an important part of celebrating life at Pacific Ridge School and building community. Student images, voices, likenesses, and work may be featured in School publications and communication channels, including:

- The School website
- Social media platforms
- Print publications
- Marketing materials
- Newsletters
- Press releases
- Admissions materials
- Digital and video content

Families are asked annually to indicate their preferences regarding the use of student media through the School's media release process. Pacific Ridge School makes every reasonable effort to honor those preferences and manage student information responsibly.

Members of the community should respect the privacy of students and families when creating or sharing content online. Images, recordings, or other content featuring students should not be shared in ways that violate privacy expectations, School policies, or applicable laws.

Questions regarding student media permissions should be directed to the Marketing and Communications Office.

Artificial Intelligence and Manipulated Content

Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies offer new opportunities for creativity and learning. They also require thoughtful and responsible use.

Members of the Pacific Ridge community may not create, share, distribute, or knowingly amplify manipulated, synthetic, or AI-generated content that:

- Misrepresents a member of the School community.
- Uses another person's likeness without permission.
- Harasses, intimidates, or harms another individual.
- Creates confusion regarding School communications, programs, activities, or positions.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to exercise sound judgment when participating in digital spaces. The Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement applies to all social media use, whether on school-provided or personal devices.

Prohibited Conduct
PRS will not tolerate behavior that harms individuals or the community, including:

- **Harassment:** Unwelcome conduct based on legally protected characteristics (including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability).
- **Bias or Discrimination:** Prejudicial or demeaning treatment of individuals or groups.
- **Intimidation:** Behavior intended to threaten or induce fear.
- **Cyberbullying:** Posting or sharing harmful, false, or disparaging content about others.

Prohibited conduct also includes:

- Vulgar, obscene, or abusive language
- Name-calling or taunting
- Sharing private or identifying information (e.g., phone numbers, addresses, schedules) without consent

Students may not:

- Create accounts that falsely represent Pacific Ridge School or School programs.
- Create anonymous, parody, impersonation, or other accounts that target or misrepresent members of the School community.
- Use School names, logos, trademarks, or branding without authorization.

- Engage in online conduct that substantially disrupts the School environment or interferes with the safety or well-being of community members.

Employee Responsibilities

Faculty and staff serve as role models within the School community and are expected to exercise professional judgment when engaging online.

This policy applies when an employee: (1) posts content related to the School; (2) engages in social media activity during working time or using School systems, accounts, or devices; (3) identifies or references their affiliation with the School; (4) interacts online with School students, parents/guardians, alumni, or other members of the School community; or (5) engages in social media activity that otherwise has an impact on, or connection to, the School community or School life.

For purposes of this policy, “social media” includes websites, applications, messaging platforms, blogs, forums, and similar digital platforms used to communicate, network, or share content. This policy supplements, and does not replace, the School’s other policies, including but not limited to confidentiality, professional conduct, use of School technology, and the **Employee-Student Relations** policy. Employees are expected to comply with all applicable School policies whenever their social media activity may involve or implicate the School.

Employees are required to comply with the following expectations:

- **Professional Boundaries with Current Students** – Employees may not communicate or connect with current students through personal or non-School social media accounts (any account that is not approved through the PRS Marketing and Communications office is considered a non-School account), including friending, following, direct messaging, texting through social platforms, or similar interactions. If a current student initiates contact through a personal account, the employee should decline, ignore, or redirect the communication to an appropriate School channel. All interactions with students must remain consistent with the School’s **Employee-Student Relations** policy.
- **School-Sponsored / School-Affiliated Accounts** – Employees may not create, manage, or operate a social media account on behalf of the School, or for any School-sponsored team, club, department, class, program, or activity, without prior approval from the School. Approved accounts are subject to oversight by the Marketing and Communications Office and must comply with applicable branding, privacy, and content standards. Administrative access, usernames, and login credentials for School-sponsored accounts must remain available to the School at all times.
- **Recent Graduates / Alumni** – The School recognizes that employees may choose to connect with graduates or alumni through personal or professional networking platforms. Employees are expected to use sound judgment and remain mindful that alumni networks may overlap with current students. Employees should consider privacy settings and audience controls to help maintain appropriate boundaries and reduce unintended visibility to current students. Employees remain responsible for ensuring that any

content, comments, photos, or interactions visible to current students are professional and appropriate.

- **Student Photos / Content** – Employees may not post, share, repost, tag, comment on, or otherwise feature current students on personal social media accounts or personal digital platforms without prior authorization from the School and any other permissions required by applicable law or School policy. Employees may share and repost attributed content from the following official school accounts:
    - Instagram: Pacific Ridge School | PRS Athletics: The Flock | PRS HOS | PRS Alumni
    - LinkedIn: Pacific Ridge School
    - Facebook: Pacific Ridge School
    - YouTube: Pacific Ridge School
    - TikTok: Pacific Ridge School
    - ISSU: Pacific Ridge School
- **Parents / Guardians** – Employees may communicate with parents or guardians regarding School-related matters only through approved School channels or School-sponsored platforms, specifically email, unless otherwise authorized by the School.
- **Confidentiality / Privacy** – Employees may not post or disclose confidential, proprietary, or protected information relating to the School, its employees, students, families, or operations. Employees are expected to comply with all applicable privacy laws and School policies.
- **Professional Conduct** – Employees may not use social media in a manner that is unlawful, harassing, discriminatory, retaliatory, threatening, defamatory, bullying, or otherwise inconsistent with the School's professional standards or legitimate business interests. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with rights protected by applicable law.
- **Representation of the School** – Unless expressly authorized, employees may not speak on behalf of the School, represent that their views are those of the School, or imply School endorsement of personal opinions, activities, or outside organizations.

Employees are reminded that School-owned systems, devices, networks, and accounts remain School property and may be monitored in accordance with applicable law. Employees should not expect privacy when using School-owned systems.

Any violation of this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees who have questions regarding whether a particular social media activity may implicate this policy should seek guidance from Human Resources before proceeding.

Student Communications

Pacific Ridge School employees may not communicate or connect with current students through personal social media accounts, including direct messaging, following, friending, or similar

interactions. Communication with students should occur through approved School channels and remain consistent with School expectations regarding employee-student relationships.

Student Images and Content

Faculty and staff are encouraged to share and amplify content published through official School channels. Faculty and staff may not independently post, share, repost, tag, or otherwise feature current students on personal social media accounts unless specifically authorized by the School and consistent with applicable media release requirements.

Photos, videos, stories, student achievements, and other content that may be appropriate for public sharing should be submitted to the Marketing and Communications Office for consideration on official School channels.

Representation of the School

Unless authorized to do so, employees may not speak on behalf of Pacific Ridge School or represent personal opinions as official School positions.

School-Managed Accounts

Pacific Ridge School's official communication channels serve as the primary platforms for sharing stories, celebrating student achievement, highlighting programs, and engaging with the broader community.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to share photos, videos, accomplishments, and community highlights with the Marketing and Communications Office for consideration on official School channels. The School recognizes that certain teams, clubs, programs, and student organizations may benefit from maintaining dedicated social media accounts. Existing approved accounts may continue to operate under School supervision and in accordance with this policy.

New Account Requests

All requests to create new social media accounts representing Pacific Ridge School teams, clubs, groups, or programs must be approved by the Marketing and Communications Office before the account is created. As part of the approval process, account sponsors should request to meet with the Marketing and Communications Office to discuss:

- The purpose of the account
- Content plans and anticipated posting frequency
- Long-term account management and transition plans
- Opportunities to share content through official School channels

Oversight and Account Management

All School-managed accounts must have a designated faculty or staff sponsor who is responsible for account oversight and compliance with School policies. Administrative access and login credentials must be shared with the Marketing and Communications office and remain available to the School at all times to ensure continuity, security, and appropriate account management. Account managers are expected to maintain accurate account information and develop plans for leadership transitions to ensure accounts remain sustainable over time.

The recommended naming convention for approved accounts is PR_[GroupName] (e.g., @PR_Robotics) to maintain consistency. Accounts may not use “Pacific Ridge School,” “Pacific Ridge,” “PRS,” or similar naming in full.

Instagram Takeover Program

Pacific Ridge students and faculty interested in participating in an Instagram Takeover must submit a request by emailing communications@pacificridge.org.

An Instagram Takeover allows an approved member of the Pacific Ridge community to collaborate with the Marketing and Communications Office by sharing content on the School's official Instagram account for a designated day or event.

All takeover requests are subject to approval by the Marketing and Communications Office. Approved participants are required to meet with Marketing and Communications prior to the takeover to review content expectations, account guidelines, and best practices. Participants must also sign a Takeover Agreement acknowledging these expectations before being granted access.

All content shared during a takeover must adhere to the standards outlined in this Social Media Policy, as well as all applicable School policies. The Marketing and Communications Office reserves the right to review, edit, or remove content at its discretion.

Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in immediate termination of the takeover, loss of eligibility to participate in future takeovers, and, when appropriate, additional disciplinary action in accordance with School policies.

Branding and Representation

School-managed accounts represent Pacific Ridge School and should reflect the School's mission, values, and community standards. School names, logos, trademarks, and visual identity elements may only be used in accordance with School guidelines and with appropriate authorization.

Media Relations and Official Statements

All media inquiries should be directed to the Marketing and Communications Office, the Head of School, or another designated School representative. To ensure accurate, consistent, and timely communication, only authorized spokespersons may make official statements on behalf of Pacific Ridge School.

Questions

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Marketing and Communications Office or Human Resources, as appropriate.