

## **Personal Communication Devices and Social Media - Staff**

### **Social Media Guidelines**

1. Social Publishing and Production Tools (e.g., blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, digital images and video)
  - a. Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Employees should be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
  - b. Employee online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that they use face-to-face.
  - c. When posting to a blog, employees should say that the information is representative of their views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of the district.
  - d. Blogs, wikis and podcasts are an extension of the classroom. What is inappropriate in the classroom should be deemed as inappropriate online.
  - e. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as a district employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. Employees should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with their work at the district.
  - f. When contributing online do not post confidential student information.
2. Disclaimers
  - a. District employees must include disclaimers within their personal blogs that the views are their own and do not reflect on the district. An example: “the postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent the district’s positions, strategies, opinions or policies”.
  - b. This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt district employees from a special responsibility when blogging.
  - c. Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer but teachers are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.
3. Copyright and Fair Use
  - a. Respect copyright and fair use guidelines.
  - b. A hyperlink to outside sources is recommended. Be sure not to plagiarize and give credit where it is due. When using a hyperlink, be sure that the content is appropriate and adheres to the district rules and regulations.

#### 4. Profiles and Identity

- a. If you identify yourself as a district employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents and students.
- b. No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on blogs or wikis.
- c. Be cautious how you setup your profile, bio, etc.
- d. When uploading pictures that represent yourself make sure you select a school appropriate image. Do not utilize protected images.

#### 5. Social Networking (e.g., Facebook, Myspace, Twitter and Instagram)

- a. Employees are personally responsible for comments/information they publish online. Employees should be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.
- b. Employee online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that they use face-to-face and should be in accordance with the highest professional standards.
- c. When posting your comments, having online conversations, etc. you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings, what you say online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a “private conversation” may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
- d. Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- e. Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject, where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- f. Before posting photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- g. Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and by that token an extension of your professional life and your classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the wall, is it really correct to put it online?
- h. Microblogging (Twitter, etc.) Comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and again refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.

#### 6. Social Bookmarking

- a. Be aware that others can view the sites that you bookmark.
- b. Be aware of works used to tag or describe the bookmark.
- c. Be aware of URL shortening services. Verify the landing site to which they point before submitting a link as a bookmark. It would be best to utilize the original URL if not constrained by the number of characters.
- d. Attempt to link directly to a page or resource if possible as you do not control what appears on landing pages in the future.

7. Instant Messaging

- a. District employees are required to get authorization to have instant messaging programs downloaded on their school computers.
- b. District employees also recognize this same authorization is required for access to instant messaging programs that are available through web interfaces with no download.
- c. Avatar images and profile information should follow the same guidelines as the above profiles and identity section.

8. Requests for Social Media Sites

The district understands that 21st century learning is constantly changing technology and that many sites that are currently “blocked” by the district’s Internet filter may have pedagogical significance for teacher and student use.

- a. If you would like to request that another online site be accessible to use for teaching and learning, please contact the superintendent.
- b. A description should be provided of the intended use of the site and what tools on the site match your needed criteria.
- c. Requests will be reviewed and the district social guidelines will be updated periodically throughout the school year.
- d. A link to the sites privacy policy should be included, if possible.