

Technology

Internet Publications and District Social Media

Applicability

This section applies to all students and employees of the District who establish and/or operate Internet publications and/or social media websites (“websites”) for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business, and any other individual operating or attempting to operate a website suggesting approval by or official affiliation with the District. Media for social interaction, using highly accessible web-based and/or mobile technologies that allow users to share content and/or engage in interactive communication through online communities. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as *Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, and YouTube*.

Official District Websites

Only the Superintendent or designee may operate or approve for operation by District employee’s official websites on behalf of the District, including the District’s website, blogs, and social media accounts.

Usage and Conduct

All District employees who use social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for Professional and Appropriate Conduct required by policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by policies 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*, 9:00, *Acceptable Use of District Electronic Resources*; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Choose a District-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
4. Inform their immediate supervisor if a student initiates inappropriate contact with them via any form of personal technology or social media.
5. Report instances of suspected abuse or neglect discovered through the use of social media or personal technology pursuant to a school employee’s obligations under policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
6. Not disclose confidential information, including but not limited to school student records (e.g., student work, photographs of students, names of students, or any other personally identifiable information about students) or personnel records, in compliance with policy 5:130, *Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information*. For District employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.

7. Refrain from using the District's logos without permission and follow Board policy 5:170, Copyright, and all District copyright compliance procedures.
8. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
9. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the District employee's personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.
10. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

All Board members who use social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for appropriate communication required by policy 2:140 *Communications To and From the Board.*, 2:140 E *Guidance for Board Member Communications Among Board Members and on Social Media* and 2:80E *Board Member Code of Conduct* at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible that is inappropriate as defined by policy 2:265 *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*.
2. Choose a District-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with the school community.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
4. Comply with policy 5:130, Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information. This means that personal technology and social media may not be used to share, publish, or transmit information about or images of students and/or District employees without proper approval. For District employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.
5. Refrain from using the District's logos without permission and follow Board policy 5:170, Copyright, and all District copyright compliance procedures

Superintendent Responsibilities

The Superintendent shall:

1. Inform District employees about this policy during the in-service on educator ethics, teacher-student conduct, and school employee-student conduct required by policy 5:120, Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest.
2. Direct Building Principals to annually:
 - a. Provide their building staff with a copy of this policy.
 - b. Inform their building staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
 - c. Remind their building staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
3. Build awareness of this policy with students, parents, and the community.
4. Ensure that neither the District, nor anyone on its behalf, commits an act prohibited by the Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act, 820 ILCS 55/10; i.e., the Facebook Password Law.

5. Periodically review this policy and any implementing procedures with District employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Board.

Monitoring Responsibilities

Employees assigned to operate the District's official websites, employees or students who operate websites for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business, and employees who supervise students operating authorized websites are responsible for maintaining and monitoring those websites. The administrative procedures implementing this policy shall set forth maintenance requirements, including the requirement that content be kept current and accurate and comply with all relevant laws and District policies and procedures, and all other District policies, administrative procedures, handbooks, and guidelines governing use of the District's electronic resources. The administrative procedures shall also set forth monitoring requirements, including the requirement that user content be monitored on a regular basis by a District employee for compliance with relevant laws and District policies and procedures, including age-appropriateness of content.

Confidentiality, Privacy, and Non-Discrimination

All District official websites and websites operated by students and/or employees for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business shall comply with relevant confidentiality and privacy policies and laws, including laws governing educational or student records, and non-discrimination policies and laws. No personally identifying student information shall be posted on such websites unless written authorization has been obtained from the student's parent/guardian, except those photographs of and other content created by students while participating in public extracurricular activities, including sports and theater and musical productions, may be used without parental/guardian permission. Employees operating District official websites and websites operated by students and/or employees for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business have no expectation of privacy in materials contained on those websites.

Links to Outside Websites and User Contents

Each website operated on behalf of the District or by students and/or employees for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business must state clearly that it is not an open or limited open forum for public use. Contributions from the public on a website, through links, comments, and other types of user content, may vary based on the characteristics of the particular website, but in no case does the District intend to create an open forum or a limited open forum over which no control of user content may be exercised.

Employees assigned to operate the District's official websites, employees or students who are authorized to operate websites for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business, and employees who supervise students operating authorized websites shall only link to outside websites and allow comments that conform with the publicly stated purpose of the website. The website shall state that links to outside websites and comments from third parties do not constitute an endorsement by the District of the opinions, products, or services presented on any website linked to or listed on a website that is linked to, or of any comment. The administrative procedures implementing this policy may set forth additional requirements and limitations on links to outside websites and/or comments.

Regardless of the characteristics of the website in question, employees assigned to operate the District's official websites, employees or students who are authorized to operate websites for educational, extra-curricular, or other purposes related to District business, and employees who supervise students operating authorized websites shall delete user comments or other submissions that:

- (i) include vulgar language;
- (ii) include personal attacks of any kind;
- (iii) reasonably can be interpreted as discrimination or animus on the basis of any protected or other immutable characteristic;
- (iv) contain spam or links to commercial websites;
- (v) are clearly off topic;
- (vi) advocate illegal activity;
- (vii) constitute marketing of particular services, products, or political organizations;
- (viii) infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
- (ix) contain personally identifiable medical information or other privileged or confidential information;
- (x) may compromise the safety or security of the District or its students, employees, or other members of the District community;
- (xi) do not conform with the purpose of the particular website in question; or
- (xii) interfere with, disrupt, or adversely affect the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including comments or other submissions that may reasonably be considered to:
 - (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of an employee; or
 - (b) endanger the health or safety of students, employees, or school property.

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