

I. Definition

- A. Social media is various forms of electronic communication that enable users to express creativity, share knowledge with those who have common interests, and connect with others.
- B. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, Pinterest, Google+, Flickr, TikTok, and other emerging sites or applications.

II. District Social Media Sites

- A. Upon adoption of this rule, no District employee, volunteer, intern, contracted vendor, or individual department or school shall have a social media site for conducting District business or communicating with students, parents, or the public unless authorized by the Superintendent or his or her designee. After the adoption of this rule other District departments, or schools, may request in writing for District approval of social media sites.
- B. District social media sites shall be reserved for District business only, to provide information to the public regarding announcements, events, etc.
- C. All content posted to approved District social media sites shall be subject to District rules and guidelines, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Approved District social media sites moderators shall not post personal information, opinions, statements, photographs, etc.
 - 2. All information on approved District social media sites shall be as current and accurate as feasible.
 - 3. All information shall be communicated on approved District social media sites from the District only.
 - 4. Student names or photographs shall not be published without written permission from each student's parent/legal guardian.

5. Confidential or proprietary information shall not be posted. All posts shall be in compliance with appropriate copyright, trademark, and privacy laws.
- D. Pursuant to Florida law, all communication created as a part of District business is public record and must be maintained and retained according to state retention guidelines. District social media site account authorization records, including access to rights and account information, shall be maintained according to the appropriate state requirements.
- E. Nothing on a District social media account, site, or page shall constitute a binding agreement, representation, or endorsement by the Gilchrist County School Board or District.

III. Employees Use of Social Media Sites

- A. The District cannot prohibit the use of personal social media sites. However, employees, volunteers, interns, or contracted vendors are encouraged to block personal sites from students. Employees, volunteers, interns, or contracted vendors, shall not use the District's seal, school logos, or any other District representation or images on any personal sites. Employees, volunteers, interns, or contracted vendors may identify themselves as a District employee, volunteer, intern, or contracted vendor, but must include a disclaimer stating that the views expressed or information posted do not reflect the views of the Gilchrist County School Board or District. Employees, volunteers, interns, or contracted vendors are informed in this rule that conduct on personal social media sites may affect his or her professional reputation and employment or contract with the District and that all are bound by the Code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct for the State of Florida.
- B. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors communication with individual students shall be with parental consent and only through the District supplied e-mail or other District approved software applications or web tools. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors are encouraged to copy parents on all communication with students.
- C. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors must maintain appropriate relationships with students and parents at all times. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors are responsible for the content of their communication. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors must be fair and respectful and maintain professionalism consistent with District policies and state law.

Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors shall not engage in any activity that could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate or that seriously reduces his or her effectiveness as an employee, volunteer, intern, and/or contracted vendor of the District.

- D. Employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors are informed in this rule that there is no expectation of privacy when using social media sites and that once the employee posts content; it is under the control of the service provider.
- E. School Board policy/rule 5.101 – Prohibiting Bullying and Harassment shall also apply in regard to employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors’ use of social media.
- F. The employee, volunteer, intern, and/or contracted vendor shall report any inappropriate use of social media to his or her supervisor, the student’s principal, or the District’s Chief Human Resources Officer, and no retaliation shall result from such a report. Good faith reporters shall be protected from retaliation in accordance with Florida law.
- G. The employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors failure to adhere to this policy, any conduct that negatively affects the job performance of the employee, volunteer, intern, and/or contracted vendor or others, or any conduct that has a negative impact on the District may result in discipline up to termination, or cancellation of contract, and legal action may apply.
- H. The Superintendent or his or her designee may establish the calendar of training and/or procedures that direct employees, volunteers, interns, and/or contracted vendors in regard to this rule/policy and in the appropriate communication of school-sponsored events or activities; including, but not limited to, field trips.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED:

*1000.21, 1001.43, 1012.795, F.S.
119, F.S., 20 U.S.C. §, 34 CFR Part 99 (FERPA),
Public Law 104-191 (HIPAA)*

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE(S): 6B-1.001

HISTORY

ADOPTED: