

SUBJECT: SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR Depew Union Free School District

Philosophy Statement

To accommodate new communication paradigms and tools, Depew Union Free School District will explore new and emerging technologies such as Social Media to supplement the range of communication services available to our community. Among the newest Social Media tools available to educators and school districts are social networking sites (hereinafter referred to as SNS). For purposes of these guidelines, social networking sites are defined as publicly used Web sites or online platforms that connect people through social and other networks (such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Pinterest, Second Life, YouTube, Ning, etc.). Social networking sites often include a range of communication platforms including, but not limited to, creation of profiles, blogs, discussion boards, instant messaging and file sharing (sharing of text, photos, video, etc).

SNS have great potential to connect people around the globe and enhance communication; however, they are also more informal, less structured and still emerging. These guidelines are designed to establish some basic parameters on the creation and use of SNS and other Social Media at Depew Union Free School District. Due to the constantly changing landscape of social media platforms, this is a living document that will be periodically updated to reflect current trends, norms, and best practices in the use of social media.

Official District Use

Official district use is defined as use of social media by an authorized individual for the express purpose of communicating the district's broad interests or specific programmatic and policy interests. Employees are prohibited from setting up public social networking sites for any official district use related to their building, team, grade level, club, sport without authorization from the Superintendent or his designee. Following authorization, the district's social media coordinator will set up an appropriate social networking site.

The use of SNS must comply with all existing district policies, regulations and guidelines including, but not limited to, the Acceptable Use Policy, FERPA, Opt-Out Consents, Web Publishing guidelines, the Code of Conduct.

Establishing the Depew Schools Social Networking Sites

1. The Superintendent/designee shall have the exclusive and final authority to determine whether individual buildings/facilities may initiate and maintain separate page(s) on the SNS. All account names and log in passwords must be on file in the Superintendent's Office.
2. Goal: 'Educating the General Public' has been defined as the rationale for creating a Depew Schools social networking presence and to guide the content that is posted on social networking sites.

Quality Control/Content Integrity

1. The Depew Union Free School District official Web site will remain the primary source for all content. Any and all material on the Depew Schools SNS page will only supplement

information that exists on the Depew UFSD official Web site and should include a link back to www.depewschools.org. An occasional reminder or announcement without a link is permissible (for example, a "Save the Date" announcement).

2. Follow the district photo release policy when posting a student's photo to a SNS. If you are unsure whether you have permission for the student featured in the photo – don't post. If the image may cause controversy or be uncomfortable for the student featured in the photo, don't post.
3. Posting student's names. Most time you will not post a student's name, but when recognizing student achievement, post the name when relevant.
4. All content posted should be evaluated to determine if it meets the requirements of the SNS goal of 'Educating the Community'.
5. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the district, its students, alumni or employees. Use good judgment and follow district policies.
6. Thoroughly spell check and grammar check your content before posting. Citizens expect that education employees set a good example when they write and speak in public.
7. Remember you are writing for publication, even on social networks. Refrain from making unsubstantiated statements. Make sure you have facts to back up your statements. Always provide full citations for laws or research.
8. The Depew UFSD SNS (e.g. Facebook) have been established to allow information to be distributed from the district to the community.
9. Personnel responsible for posting acknowledge and agree that when they create or post material on the Depew UFSD SNS (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) they are in effect "content publishers" and as such are subject to a host of ethical and legal obligations including, but not limited to, compliance with the federal [Digital Millennium Copyright Act](#).
10. Depew UFSD shall provide general training for all personnel responsible for posting, including training on the use of Depew UFSD SNS, ethical, legal considerations and compliance with all applicable policies and regulations.
11. SNS administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the District's Staff Acceptable Use Policy. Inappropriate, offensive, injurious and illegal content or information that may compromise a student, employees or school's safety or security must be removed by the Depew UFSD SNS administrators or by the request of the superintendent. Once removed, repost the disclaimer, "Depew Union Free School District is not liable for the content or comments posted to the site. Any inappropriate content may be removed. This site is monitored during normal business hours."
12. The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. Educational employees have a responsibility to maintain appropriate employee-student relationships, whether on or off duty. Both case law and public expectations hold educational employees to a higher standard of conduct than the general public. Due to the

evolving nature of social web sites, District personnel should not use personal SNS to create or maintain personal relationships with students. For purposes of these guidelines, "personal relationships with students" shall mean any behavior or conduct that is unrelated to course work or official school matters. Such behavior may erode the professional authority and traditional roles of teacher and student within the District and may violate District policies and/or regulations.

13. Depew UFSD employees are discouraged from "friending" or "following" any student currently enrolled in any school within the District, Pre-K through 12, or their parents. It is too easy for genuinely-intentioned and innocent comments and situations to be misinterpreted, resulting in potentially damaging consequences for everyone involved. If your position within the District calls for communication with students or parents and is educationally justifiable, the use of the District network, email, district learning management systems within the District website, and school-provided/owned equipment are suggested for use when communicating on-line.

Personal Use and Responsibility

Personal use of social media is defined as use that has nothing to do with an employee's job duties for the district or his or her professional interests. For example, outside of work hours, an employee might create or maintain a blog related to a hobby, or a personal Facebook page containing news about his or her family and friends. An employee checking his or her personal Facebook page, sending out a personal Tweet, or watching the latest viral YouTube video are examples of personal use of social media during the work day.

1. Depew UFSD does not allow personal use of social media during work hours and on district owned hardware. In accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy for Staff, computer access should be for educational and professional or career development activities.
2. Depew UFSD personnel shall conduct themselves in the "virtual" or online world of SNS just as they would in all face-to-face human interactions, namely treating others with dignity and respect and observing all other established standards of professional conduct.
3. Employees must be respectful and professional in all communications (by word, image or other means). While engaged in professional use of social media, employees shall not use obscene, profane or vulgar language on any social media network or engage in online communication or conduct that is harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory or that encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, inappropriate sexual behavior, sexual harassment, or bullying.
4. Any information shared on social networks regarding the business of the district, whether using personal or district equipment to post, may be considered a public record and retrievable until FOIL.
5. While engaged in professional use of social media, do not post confidential or proprietary information about the district, its students, alumni or employees. Use good judgment and follow district policies.

6. Comments related to Depew UFSD should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, employees should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain. Remember that posted information could be interpreted as an extension of your office or classroom. What is inappropriate in your office or classroom is also inappropriate online. If posting comments or viewpoints on topics related to NTCS D using any online medium, be sure you state that the information is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of NTCS D.
7. The District and the Superintendent reserves the right to require the removal of any posts or information which violates any District rule, regulation, or policy. The District and the Superintendent also reserve the right to end the right of any individual to post through the SNS for any reason.

School Logos

Within your personal social mediums, do not use any District or school logo without written permission from District officials. For official District SNS, the District will provide you with a profile image to use.

Disclaimers

As a public entity, Depew Union Free School District should include disclaimers on their SNS sites about grounds for removal of comments and the frequency the site is monitored. "Depew Union Free School District is not liable for the content or comments posted to the site. Any inappropriate content may be removed. This site is monitored during normal business hours."

Effective 10/01/2018