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Staff and District Social Media Use

Social media is an important tool for communicating, keeping up-to-date with current developments in education, and for conducting research to enhance management, teaching, and learning skills. The district also uses social media accounts to provide information to district stakeholders. This policy is intended to ensure (1) appropriate use of social media by staff and (2) appropriate control of social media accounts belonging to or affiliated with the district. Staff should also refer to the district’s policy on Staff Computer and Internet Usage.

I. Personal Versus School-Affiliated Social Media Use

A. Personal Social Media Use

1. The school district will not require staff members or applicants for employment to provide the district with their username and password to personal social media accounts.
2. The district will not require staff to add anyone to the list of contacts associated with the staff member’s personal social media accounts or require a staff member to change the settings on his or her personal social media accounts so that others can or cannot view their accounts.
3. Staff members whose personal social media use interferes with the orderly operation of the school or who use social media in ways that are not protected by the First Amendment may be subject to discipline by the district.
4. Staff members who wish to begin using or to continue using the school district name, programs, mascot, image or likeness as part of any social media profile must notify their supervising administrator of the use, and must secure the administrator’s permission to do so.

B. School-Affiliated Social Media Use

1. Any social media account which purports to be “the official” account of the school district (e.g., “Badger Wrestling”), or any of its programs, classes or entities will be considered to be an account that is used exclusively for the school district’s business purpose. Staff members may not use “official” accounts for personal use.

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2. Staff may be required to provide their supervising administrator with the username and password to school-affiliated social media accounts.
 3. Staff may be required to interact with specified individuals on school-affiliated social media accounts.
 4. When staff use school-affiliated social media accounts to comment on school-related matters, they do not do so as private citizens and are therefore not entitled to First Amendment protections.

61 **II. Staff Expectations in Use of Social Media – Applicable to Both**
62 **Personal and School-Affiliated Use**

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64 **A. General Use and Conditions**
65

66 Staff must comply with all board policies, contract provisions, and
67 applicable rules of professional conduct in their social media usage.
68 They must comply with the board’s policy on professional boundaries
69 between staff and students at all times and in both physical and digital
70 environments.

71
72 Staff must obtain the consent of their building principal or the
73 superintendent prior to posting any student-related information in order
74 to make sure that the publication does not violate the Federal Education
75 Records Privacy Act or any other laws. Staff must also comply with all
76 applicable state and federal record retention requirements, even with
77 regard to personal social media usage.

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79 Staff must comply with all applicable laws prohibiting the use or
80 disclosure of impermissible content, such as copyright laws,
81 accountability and disclosure laws, and any other law governing the use
82 of resources of a political subdivision. Questions about appropriate
83 content should be referred to the staff member’s supervising
84 administrator.

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86 **B. Acceptable Use**
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1. Staff may use social media for instructional purposes.
 2. Staff may use social media for school-related communication with fellow educators, students, parents, and patrons.
 3. Teachers should integrate the use of electronic resources, which may include social media, into the classroom. As the quality and integrity of content on social media is not

97 guaranteed, teachers must examine the source of the
98 information and provide guidance to students on
99 evaluating the quality of information they may encounter.

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101 **C. Unacceptable Use**
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- 103 1. Staff shall not access obscene or pornographic material
104 while at school, on school-owned device or on school-
105 affiliated social media accounts.
- 106 2. Staff shall not engage in any illegal activities, including the
107 downloading and reproduction of copyrighted materials.
108
- 109 3. Staff shall not access social media networking sites such as
110 Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram on school-owned
111 devices or during school time unless such access is for an
112 educational activity which has been preapproved by the
113 staff member’s immediate supervisor. This prohibition
114 extends to using chat rooms, message boards, or instant
115 messaging in social media applications and includes
116 posting on social networking sites using personal electronic
117 devices.
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120 **III. School-Affiliated Digital Content**
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122 **A. General Use and Conditions for School-Affiliated Accounts**
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124 Staff must obtain the permission of their supervising administration
125 prior to creating, publishing, or using any school-affiliated web pages,
126 microblogs, social media pages or handles, or any other digital content
127 which represents itself to be school-related, or which could be
128 reasonably understood to be school-related. This includes any content
129 which identifies the school district by name in the account name or which
130 uses the school’s mascot name or image.
131

132 Staff must provide administrators with the username and password for
133 all school-affiliated accounts and must only publish content appropriate
134 for the school setting. Staff may not provide the username and
135 password to school-affiliated accounts to any unauthorized individual,
136 including students and volunteers.
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138 **B. Moderation of Third Party Content**
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140 The purpose of school-related social media accounts is to disseminate
141 information. No school-related or school-affiliated social media account
142 covered by this policy shall permit comments by the public unless
143 otherwise approved by the superintendent. All comment functions for

144 applications such as Facebook and Instagram must be turned to "off"
145 without this approval.

146
147 In the event the superintendent permits content created by anyone
148 other than the administrator of the account to appear on the account's
149 pages, such as comments made by students, parents, and patrons, the
150 account administrator must monitor the content to ensure it complies
151 with this policy. Posts, comments, or any other content made on the
152 account's pages may be removed when the content meets any of the
153 following conditions:

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155 1. Is obscene, lewd, or appeals to prurient interests;
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157 2. Contains information relating to a student matter or
158 personnel matter which is protected under or prohibited by
159 state or federal law;
- 160
161 3. Contains threatening, harassing, or discriminatory words
162 or phrases;
- 163
164 4. Incites or is reasonably anticipated to incite violence, illegal
165 activity, or a material and substantial disruption to school
166 operations or activities; or
- 167
168 5. Contains any other threat to the safety of students and
169 staff.

170
171 Every account administrator must keep a copy of any removed content
172 and must provide a copy to the superintendent along with written
173 notification for the reason the post has been removed. All questions
174 about the appropriateness of removal must be directed to the
175 superintendent.

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177 Adopted on: September 13, 2016

178 Revised on: November 13, 2018

179 Reviewed on: November 13, 2018

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