

### Staff Use of Social Media

Samples of social media include but are not limited to: social networks, blogs, listserv, newsgroups, forum, chat(room) and text messaging. It is the intent of this policy to provide the protections necessary and usage guidelines for users of social media in the School District of West Salem. Free expression of ideas is acknowledged and encouraged in the District. Staff should understand that the use of social media as a school resource is a privilege, not a right. Violations of these procedures or rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The District provides a social media presence created and monitored by the District and can be used as a resource pursuant to the District's educational or business purposes.

Staff must comply with all School District of West Salem Board of Education Policies and use social media in a responsible manner.

#### A. District Sanctioned Versus Personal Media

These guidelines should serve as a reference tool for staff to make informed decisions regarding their selection and use of social media resources and other digital communication devices.

1. District-sanctioned social media may be used to fulfill the District's Mission Statement and are to be related to the academic programs of operations of the District.
2. Staff who use district-sanctioned social media for school related purposes are reminded to do so in a responsible and professional manner and to inform the building administrator of such accounts. The building administrator has the right to allow or deny use of social media for school related purposes and the platform being used.
3. District-sanctioned social media accounts established may not serve as a public or limited public forum for the expression or posting of opinions, concerns, beliefs, or other information.

4. The District does not take a position on an employee's decision to participate in social media for personal use on personal time. Staff members shall not communicate with students and families via personal social media accounts regarding topics pertaining to your work with the District. Staff shall make use of privacy settings, photo tagging and other tools to prevent personal information regarding students and their families becoming publicly available and to restrict student access to personal information about the particular staff member.
5. Staff shall avoid posting student information, pictures, work product exemplars on personal social media accounts as current parental consents apply to only District-sanctioned sites.
6. Staff shall not "friend," follow, or otherwise interact with students from personal social media accounts.
7. Staff shall avoid communicating with students and families through personal communication devices for any school related matters. Staff members who choose to communicate with students and families through text messages should do so using a district-provided device or using district technology. Staff should avoid giving students and families personal phone numbers.

B. Social Media Use in the Classroom

1. When using social media within the classroom, staff should provide information to families regarding the purpose for the use of the selected media, an example of what the media project will look like and a description of the amount of student information and level of security. Unless detrimental to the overall objective of the project, staff shall use password protected social media sites available only to families.
2. Staff should work with their building principal whenever they are considering a new use of social media or digital communication within the classroom.

3. Communications must be age-appropriate and related directly to a student's education.
4. Staff communication directly with student shall include parents in all digital communications unless parents actively opt-out or reject this option.

C. Standards of Professional Conduct

1. Staff who identify themselves as an employee of the School District of West Salem when using a personal social media account or platform shall be aware they have publicly associated themselves with the district, their colleagues and the West Salem school community; therefore, staff who identify themselves as an employee of the district shall ensure that any associated content is consistent with the mission and work of the District. It is recommended that staff who have identified themselves as associated with the District use the following disclaimer on personal social media: "The views of this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views, opinions, vision, or strategies of the School District of West Salem."
2. Staff should use caution when posting any comment and/or image to the internet or on social media that may reflect negatively on their professional image.
3. Staff shall not engage in any form of obscene, harassing, racist, sexist or abusive language or behavior when acting as a representative of the District.
4. Staff have the responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-student relationships at all times and have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on social media.
5. Staff shall not divulge any personal information about students, or jeopardize their safety in any way.
6. Staff shall not conduct inappropriate conversations or relationships including, but not limited to digital images, text, and media unrelated to school curricula and correspondence.

7. If a staff member learns of information, on the social networking site, that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines, he/she must report it as required by law.

Approved: March 11, 2019