

SECTION: **PERSONNEL**

TITLE: **EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

<p>1. Purpose</p> <p>2. Definitions</p> <p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>The Board recognizes that the use of social media has become an important tool in the lives of employees, students and the general population. The Board also recognizes, however, that social media poses inherent risks and dangers. The Board encourages employees to use social media responsibly.</p> <p><u>Social Media</u> – The term “social media,” for the purposes of this Policy, includes all web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public, semi-public or private profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections made by others within the system. Such sites include Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.</p> <p>The term “Social Media” shall also expressly include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) All other interactive websites, such as blog sites and microblogs (such as Twitter), virtual worlds, video/audio/photo sharing sites (such as YouTube, Flickr, photo upload sites, etc.), instant messaging, podcasts, chat rooms and other interactive online forums;(2) Internet applications; and(3) All non-District email accounts and sites. <p>The term “Social Media” shall expressly excludes collaborative websites that are contained within the District’s web domain or District-sponsored collaboration sites for which the building or District administration has approved and has provided assurance, in writing, that the site does not permit collaboration by members of the public outside of the school, meets the safety and quality standards and requirements set forth in this Policy and satisfactorily meets the standards set forth in Bd. Pol. 6176, related to the District’s own website.</p> <p><u>Students</u> – In this Policy, this term refers to individuals who are currently students in the District.</p> <p>District employees are required to comply with all District policies, including Bd. Pol. 6176– Acceptable Use of Internet and</p>
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Computer Technology.

Employees are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Employees should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

Communication with Students

All personal communications with students must be of a professional nature. Employees must maintain strict professional boundaries of communication with students. With the exception of employees and immediate family members who are students of the District, employees are prohibited from “friending” students, allowing students access to the employee’s personal pages, or using social networking media to enter into communications with students.

The District takes personal/professional boundary limits with students very seriously and will take disciplinary action against any employee who violates this policy and/or who initiates or maintains inappropriate personal communications and/or a personal relationship with a student through any means, including social networking.

The District recommends that faculty and staff take all necessary steps to limit access to their personal social networking media and prevent students from obtaining such access. Faculty/staff members are reminded that, due to the nature of the technology, individuals do not have an expectation of privacy on social media sites.

Social Media Prohibitions

Employees May Not:

- Utilize personal social media sites to communicate with students unless such students are members of the employee’s immediate family.
- Enter into inappropriate communications/relationships with students via social media websites or other electronic means;
- Publish materials, images, or other media that reflects or describes conduct unbecoming of a teacher or degrades professional standards.
- Post or share information on a public site that discusses or

portrays sex, nudity, alcohol or drug use or other behaviors associated with the staff member's private life that would be inappropriate to discuss with a student at school;

- Post or share personally identifiable information about students;
- Disclose personally identifiable information about co-workers or supervisors;
- Post or share discriminatory or defamatory information;
- Post or share comments that would cause a disruption in the educational environment;
- Use District letterhead or any other copyrighted District information in any Internet posting without authorization from the Superintendent or his/her designee;
- Suggest in any personal social networking context that the employee/faculty member in any way represents the District or is speaking on behalf of the District;
- Act in a matter that creates a false impression that the individual is communicating on behalf of, or as a representative of, the District;
- Establish a social networking media site or other online account that purports or otherwise appears to be a social media site or account endorsed by, created by or in any way affiliated with the District without the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- Violate the District's Acceptable Use Policy (Bd. Pol. 6176); or
- Violate any District policy on a social media site, including the District's policies on discrimination, harassment, privacy, bullying.

Prohibition of Required Use of Social Media by Students for Assignments/Projects

Teachers are not permitted to require a student's use of social media within the educational program without following the requirements of this Policy. An employee using social media as an instructional resource may not interact with students using

his/her personal social media profile/site. He/she must create a professional profile.

Violations of Policy

Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including suspension or termination of employment.