



432 EMPLOYEE USE OF ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA

I. Purpose

District 200 recognizes the value and increasing role of online social media. The purpose of this regulation is to address the use of social media in the classroom and also to provide guidance to employees on the maintenance of professional ethics and boundaries when utilizing social media in their personal and professional lives.

II. Definitions

- A. **Public online social media** are defined to include: Websites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other interactive social media generally available to the public on the Internet (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, etc.).
- B. **District-approved, password-protected online social media** are interactive media within the district's electronic technologies network or which the district has approved for educational use. The district has greater authority and responsibility to protect minors from inappropriate content and can limit public access within this forum.

III. Classroom Use of Online Social Media

Teachers may elect to utilize district-approved, password-protected online social media in the classroom for purposes of instruction. Teachers may also elect to use public online social media in the classroom for purposes of instruction. Use of online social media in the classroom is subject to the following:

- A. When using either type of online social media in the classroom, teachers shall instruct students on the appropriate use of such sites as described in Policy 524 Acceptable Use, each site must ensure that a signed "Permission for Student Access to the Internet" is on file for each student using the Internet in the classroom.
- B. Teachers should use caution that private student data, as outlined in Policy 515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records, and work is not made public on public online social media sites without written permission.

- C. When utilizing either type of online social media in the classroom, teachers shall ensure compliance with any applicable terms of use of the online social media site.

IV. Personal Use of Public Online Social Media By Employees

The decision to make personal use of public online social media is left to the discretion of each employee. District 200 does not affirmatively monitor employee use of public online social media; however, it may take appropriate responsive action when it becomes aware of, or suspects, conduct or communication on a public online social media site that adversely affects the workplace or violates applicable professional codes of ethics.

Employees will be held responsible for their disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or for the content of anything communicated by the employee on any online social media site.

An employee who fails to comply with the guidance set forth in this regulation may be subject to disciplinary and other consequences, up to and including termination, subject to applicable collective bargaining agreements. For that reason, employees shall observe the following when using public online social media:

- A. Employees must consider their role as school personnel before posting or communicating content that is obscene, profane, vulgar, harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, offensive, disrespectful, or defamatory or that discusses or encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, sexual behavior or sexual harassment.
- B. Views expressed on a public online social media site are the employee's alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of District 200. Employees may not act as a spokesperson for the district or post comments as a representative of the district, except as authorized by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.
- C. Employees may not disclose information on any public online social media site that is private, confidential or proprietary to District 200, its students, or

employees or that is protected by data privacy laws or Policy 515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.

- D. Employees may not use or post the District 200 or a school logo on any public online social media site without permission from the superintendent, the school principal, or designee.
- E. District 200 recognizes that student groups or members of the public may create public online social media representing students or groups within the district. When employees, including coaches/advisors, choose to join or engage with these social networking groups, they do so as an employee of the district.
- F. Employees have responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-student relationships at all times. This includes using professional judgment when necessary for the safety of students online and responding appropriately as a mandated reporter when applicable.

V. Official School or District Public Online Social Media Sites

District 200 and individual schools and departments may choose to establish an official presence on public online social media sites with prior administrative approval. When such a presence is established, an employee shall be designated as the website manager and login credentials must be shared with the website manager's supervisor and the school district's coordinator of technology. The website manager is responsible for keeping the website updated and monitoring the content on the website.

Sites may be linked from the school district or school's official District 200 homepage and must otherwise comply with applicable provisions for District Websites. The website manager is responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable records retention requirements.

Legal References: *Minnesota Administrative Rule 3512.5200, Code of Ethics For School Administrators*
 Minnesota Administrative Rule 8710.2100, Code of Ethics For Minnesota Teachers
 47 U.S.C § 254 (h), Children's Internet Protection Act - Administrative Regulation

Cross References: *Policy 524 Acceptable use of Internet*
 Policy 515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

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