

Minidoka County School District #331 realizes that part of 21st Century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of employees, students and parents engaging, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is also a part of 21st Century learning.

Minidoka County School District 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 the District or Idaho applicable professional codes of ethics. Free speech protects educators who want to participate in social media. However, Minidoka County School District may discipline teachers if their speech, including online postings, made during scheduled work time or on District computers disrupts school operations.

District computers and time on the job are reserved for District-related business. Employees shall not use scheduled work time to view social media and personal web sites. District email accounts are a matter of public record and as such may be subject to public records requests.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. [Employees who are aware of other employees who violate this policy should report this information to the Superintendent.]

Employee-Student Relations

Employees are prohibited from establishing personal or unprofessional relationships with elementary or secondary (K-12)~~current~~ students. Each employee is assigned a District e-mail account for work-related correspondence. This e-mail account may be used to communicate with a group of students, provided all students in the group receive the message.

District employees are prohibited from communicating with ~~current~~individual elementary or secondary (K-12) students, from a personal e-mail account or from responding to a current student who has communicated to the employee's personal e-mail account. In addition, employees are prohibited from communicating with individual elementary or secondary (K-12)~~current~~ students via social media or by text messaging or from regularly receiving text messages from elementary or secondary (K-12)~~current~~ students unless permission is granted by the building supervisor in writing. The only exception to this policy is if the student is a relative of the employee.

Employees are prohibited from discussing ~~students or~~ posting to, or messaging any individual~~current~~ elementary or secondary (K-12) students accounts on any social networking program, including but not limited to Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Wikki, Flickr, Instagram, Snapchat or personal blogs. Communication with a student by a District employee must be limited to subjects concerning the current student's education or activities for which the employee has assigned responsibility. Communication with students via social media should be from the

employee to a group of students. (Example: If an employee uses social media to communicate with a group of students about a change in practice location, ~~he/she~~they may post the event and answer questions about their post concerning a school-related event, but ~~they-he/she are-is~~ not to make posts to any individual student’s social media account.) District employees are required to report to their building administrator any student communication that causes concern about the appropriateness of the communication.

Professional Communications

Employees should not post any derogatory or ~~/inflammatory~~ information about the District, ~~or other its employees, or individual students.~~ If there is a concern, it should be dealt with by the proper ~~channels and chain of command,~~ not through social media. Employees who post information on social media web sites that includes inappropriate personal information such as, but not limited to: provocative photographs, sexually explicit messages, ~~the inappropriate~~ use of alcohol, ~~illegal~~ drugs or anything students are prohibited from doing must understand that if students, parents or other employees obtain access to such information, each case will be investigated by school and District officials and, if warranted, the employee will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Confidential Information

Employees shall not post confidential or proprietary information about the District, its employees, current students or agents on social media and personal web sites.

Disclaimer

If an employee identifies himself as a District employee on a social media or personal web site, a disclaimer should explain that the views expressed are not those of the District. ~~In order to -protect the District’s institutional voice,~~ posts on social media sites should ~~protect the District’s institutional voice by be remaining being~~ professional in tone and in good taste. Individual employee should not construe their social media sites as representing the District as a whole. In addition, employees shall not use District logos, images, etc. on social or personal media sites.

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. When either type of online social media is proposed to be used in the classroom, teachers, staff and students shall follow the procedures set forth in Minidoka County School District Policy numbers 502.97 and 402.97.



LEGAL REFERENCE: Idaho Code §33-512

ADOPTED: December 20, 2010

AMENDED: May 16, 2011