

Existing policy and regulation, adopted 5/20/14. An updated CABA version follows for review and comparison.

Instruction

Social Media

The Woodbridge School District recognizes that students, teachers, parents, and members of the Woodbridge Community engage in the use of social media for personal, educational, and professional uses.

The Woodbridge School District also recognizes that even though some under-age children may use social media sites intended only for those aged thirteen and above, it is not the intent of the District to encourage inappropriate use of social media sites. The District recognizes its responsibility to educate children in the appropriate use of social media and will use social media sites designed for use by children under that age of thirteen and that comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act to do so.

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction on the acceptable use of social media by employees of the Woodbridge School District. The intent of the policy is to guide staff in the appropriate use of online community sites with students and to maintain professional standards in their own use of social media.

This policy addresses the use of social media sites in student learning activities and in teacher and student relationships. The policy also differentiates between online community sites and personal social networking sites.

- **Online community sites** are used primarily for collaboration and shared knowledge building.
- **Personal social networking** sites are centered on an individual rather than a group. Such sites are used primarily for sharing personal information such as photos and updates.

Guiding Principles

1. Online behavior should at all times demonstrate respect for the dignity of each person.
2. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, the Children's Internet Protection Act and policies of the Woodbridge School District must always be observed.
3. Staff and student online interaction shall occur only in an educational context using school-approved sites.
4. Staff and students shall behave in an ethical manner when interacting and using online community sites and resources.
5. Staff personal social networking online shall be congruent with the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators (2011).
6. Professional development programs are provided in school for staff on the appropriate use of social media.
7. Educational programs are provided for students to ensure the appropriate use of social network and community learning sites on the Internet.

Instruction

Social Media (continued)

Staff Use of Online Community Sites For Learning

- Staff are encouraged to use online learning communities with their students in order to achieve educational outcomes.
- When using online community sites with students' consideration shall always be given to the age and developmental level of the students.
- Staff shall ensure that they prepare students to act in accordance with the guiding principles before using online community sites for learning.
- The use of online community sites shall be authorized by the Principal or his / her delegate.
- Parental or guardian permission shall be obtained for students to register with online learning communities.
- Students shall not be asked to falsify their age or identity to register on any site for educational purposes.
- Staff shall respect students' rights to privacy in academic work, records and results when posting online.
- The learning activity shall not be linked back to a student's own personal social network pages.
- Staff shall not use social networking sites as learning tools for students.

Procedures for Using Online Learning Communities with Students

- Discuss any use of online community sites with the Principal or his / her delegate outlining the activity and its educational goals.
- If not included in the Student Responsible Use Agreement, obtain parental permission before students are asked to register with online community websites.
- Keep a record of the student's login names. (Students should not publish their real names on a public site.)
- Clearly communicate to students their responsibility for appropriate interaction with others and suitable content posting online.
- Obtain permission from the Principal before school or staff photographs or other identifying photographs are posted online.
- Ensure another teacher or member of the school leadership team has full administrator access to the site.
- Monitor the site frequently and actively review the content.

Instruction

Social Media (continued)

Staff Are Required To Educate Students Using Social Media Of Any Kind To:

- Respect themselves and others when publishing or communicating online.
- Keep communication channels transparent and supervised by adults.
- Keep personal information private.
- Not share usernames and passwords with anyone.
- Report any attacks or inappropriate content directed at them.

Policy

Staff Personal Social Network Pages

- Social networking sites must not be used by staff as a platform for learning activities with students.
- Staff should not accept students as ‘friends’ on their own social network sites or interact with students on social networking sites.
- Staff are advised to use professional discretion before accepting ex-students or parents of current students as friends. Understand that the uneven power dynamics of schools, in which adults have had authority over former students, continues to shape those relationships.
- Staff must not discuss students or co-workers or publicly criticize District policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- Staff must not post images that include students on social networking sites.
- Appropriate professional standards required of staff employed in Woodbridge School District must be observed. These standards include but are not limited to documents outlined in the supporting document section of this policy.

"The District recognizes its responsibility to educate students regarding appropriate behavior on social networking and chat room sites about cyberbullying. Therefore students shall be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response."

Social Media Policy – Administrative Regulations

Basis of Discretion - Maintaining Professional Standards

Faculty and Staff shall use discretion when using social networking sites both personally and professionally. Certified personnel should apply the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators to all social media.

Instruction

Social Media (continued)

Social Media Policy – Administrative Regulations

Basis of Discretion - Maintaining Professional Standards (continued)

- Be transparent. When using social media educationally, identify yourself with your real name.
- If you use a personal social networking site, you should ensure there is a clear distinction between your educational sites and your personal sites.
- Be judicious. Make sure that you are not sharing confidential information concerning Woodbridge School District, its staff, students or parents.
- Perception can become reality. By identifying yourself as a Woodbridge School District staff member, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about the district. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with the district's professional standards.
- Weigh whether a particular posting could put your effectiveness as a teacher at risk. Post only what you want the world to see.
- Do not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.
- Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
- Exercise appropriate discretion when using social media for personal communications with the knowledge that students may use adult behavior displayed on social networking sites as a model.
- Your responsibility. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social media on behalf of the Woodbridge School District is not a right but an opportunity. Ultimately, what you publish is yours and so is the responsibility.
- Discuss with personal friends the need for discretion when they post images or information about you on their own social network pages. Explain to them that once material is posted and identifiable, it is impossible to control its rapid sharing into school communities.
- Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends' sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site whether posted by you or someone else.
- Maintain control of security, privacy and access to your personal pages and information.
- Visit your profile's security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to 'only friends'. Do not use 'Friends of Friends' and 'Networks and Friends' as these open your content to a large group of unknown people. Your privacy and that of your family may be at risk.
- Be cautious when installing external applications that work with the social networking site.

Instruction

Social Media (continued)

(cf. 6141.321-Computer Acceptable Use Policy)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-19(b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records.
10-15b Access of parent or guardians to student's records.
10-209 Records not to be public.
11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of document
11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations.
46b-56 (e) Access to Records of Minors.
Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of PL 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.)
Dept. of Education. 34 CFR. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)-parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.
Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (HR 4577, P.L.106-554)
Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254[h],[I])
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq., Part F)
Public Law 94-553, The Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. seq.
"Public Law 110-385 Broadband Data Improvement Act/Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act"
Reno v. ACLU, 521 U.S. 844 (1997)
Ginsberg v. New York, 390 U.S. 629, at 642, n.10 (1968)
Board of Education v. Pico, 457 U.S. 868 (1988)
Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 620, 267 (1988)

Policy adopted: May 20, 2014

WOODBIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Explanatory Notes/Glossary

Web 2.0

Web 2.0 is defined as the ‘read-write’ web; it provides all the services and applications to allow individuals to co-create content, collaborate and share it with others. It supports user-generated content rather than specialized authors or publishers. It uses a variety of affordable technologies like blogs, podcasts and wikis, and encourages the social aspect of the Web, through the use of social. These tools are privately used by staff and students and increasingly are providing a learning platform for knowledge building.

Social Network Sites

Web-based external, commercial, non-educational media sites for creation of connections and maintaining relationships and communities. There are many types including those intended for personal networking and those intended for group collaboration.

Personal Social Network Sites

Internet services intended for use primarily for private social networking.

Professional Online Community Network Sites

Sites intended for group collaboration and shared knowledge building.

Friends and ‘Friending’

Friends are those invited to access personal information on social network sites. Friends have access to photographs, text postings, and comments on a person’s page. There is no limit to the number of friends a person can have and many teenagers may acquire hundreds. The process of friending requires an invitation to be sent to an individual or a request to become a friend to be accepted by the owner of the page.

Privacy Settings

The creator of a page can set permissions to control who can view content on the page. The setting ‘everyone’ is usually the default on social network pages; but the page owner can also restrict all or parts of the content to be viewed only by ‘friends of friends’, ‘friends only’, or customize the access to the page.

Registering

When creating a personal page or registering to join an online community, users must first register with the site. This requires the user to provide their name and email address. The amount of information required varies. Many sites invite users to add a personal profile containing a photo and further personal information.

Supporting Documents:

- Student Responsible Use Agreement Form
- Employee Responsible Use Policy
- Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act
- Children’s Internet Protection Act

An optional policy to consider.

Instruction

Internet/Computer Networks Use

Online Social Networking

The Internet and electronic communications have vast potential to support curriculum and student learning. The Board of Education (Board) believes they should be used in school as a learning resource both in developing student skills and providing on-going professional staff development activities. The Board realizes that existing and emerging smart technologies will continue to present new challenges to the educational community.

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the District's technology system and responsible and safe use of Internet social networking tools/sites.

Electronic information research skills are fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the District's computer system and the Internet enables students and staff to explore global resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The District's computer system has a limited educational purpose, which includes its use for classroom activities, educational research and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the District system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the District's mission, portrait of a graduate and school policies. The District's computer network is considered a limited forum enabling the restriction of speech for valid educational reasons. For safety purposes, the District updates employs both Internet filters and firewalls.

Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property or at District-sponsored activities unless the posting is approved by a District representative/teacher/staff member. Social media websites are websites and apps such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, You Tube, Tik Tok and Snapchat.

The District will not be liable for information/comments posted by students on social media websites when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment.

The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

Instruction

Internet/Computer Networks Use

Online Social Networking (continued)

Among the uses that are considered irresponsible and which constitute a violation of this policy are the following:

1. Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. This includes the transmittal of offensive or harassing messages; offering for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by District policy; viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intruding into the networks or computers of others; and downloading or transmitting confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials.
2. Uses that cause harm or threaten to cause harm to others or damage to their property. This includes defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); employment of another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone else is communicating or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; uploading a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participation in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
3. Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet. For example disclosure or sharing personal passwords with others; impersonation of another user.
4. Uses that are commercial transactions. Students and other users may not sell or buy anything over the Internet. Private information shall not be shared.

(cf. 6141.321 – Computer Acceptable Use Policy)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-19(b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records.

10-15b Access of parent or guardians to student's records.

10-209 Records not to be public.

11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents

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Internet/Computer Networks Use

Online Social Networking

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)

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Policy adopted:

cps 4/10

rev 9/23

An optional regulation to consider.

Instruction

Internet/Computer Networks Use

Online Social Networking

The use of permitted social networking sites by students on District computers shall be in conformity with the following guidelines.

1. The search for illegal, crude, crass and inappropriate things is not acceptable and should be avoided.
2. The computers and accessing social networking sites should be used for research and school projects or to connect with other students in a positive manner.
3. The social networking site shall not be used to harass other students.
4. It is necessary to be mindful of copyright infringement, plagiarism, illegal downloading, and AI generated content.
5. Utilize teachers and administrators to determine if the site to be used is appropriate.
6. Leave an inappropriate site immediately when accessing such a site in error.
7. Assignments involving the use of social networking tools on the Internet are like any other school assignment subject to the policies and procedures in the student handbook.
8. Online social networking and the increasing use of Internet sites which contain personal information also increases the opportunity for unwelcome and unsolicited written material, pictures or videos. Harassment in any form, including electronically posted comments, is unacceptable.

Regulation approved:

cps 4/10
rev 9/23