

**SECTION: Operations**

**TITLE: Electronic Communications and Social Media**

FIRST READING: February 13, 2017

SECOND READING: February 27, 2017

ADOPTED: February 27, 2017

REVISED:

<p>1. Purpose</p>	<p>Social media can be a convenient, fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with your family and friends. However, using social media involves certain risks and responsibilities. The entire District community has an obligation to take all reasonable steps to protect the safety, identity and privacy of District students and their families. Moreover, a work environment conducive to the mission of the District requires District employees to conduct themselves in a manner that ensures positive relations between the community and District as well as among District employees. For this reason, all District employees should conduct themselves in a professional and respectable manner in public spaces, including in their online activity.</p>
<p>2. Authority</p>	<p>The Board exercises its authority through this policy in order to fulfill the statutory mandate and the mission of the District, and to maintain an appropriate atmosphere for learning in its schools, impose proper safeguards for the District's students, and ensure positive relations between the community and District and appropriate working relations among District employees.</p> <p>The Board cautions those subject to this policy that they should have no expectation of privacy in electronic communications, especially when using District owned or operated devices or networks, even when used in conjunction with personal social media accounts, and that any such expectation is unreasonable.</p> <p>The Board, through this policy does not intend to limit the content of any individual's speech where that individual is exercising his or her Constitutional free speech rights in a fashion that does not improperly interfere with the District's mission.</p> <p>Where a District employee's otherwise impermissible speech is permitted because such speech concerns matters of public importance and the exercise of that speech objectively outweighs the legitimate and lawful interest of the District in preventing it, the District's reasonably imposed</p>

	<p>limitations on time, place or manner of such speech as set forth in this policy will still apply.</p>
<p>3. Definitions</p>	<p><u>Electronic communications</u>: For purposes of this policy, electronic communication shall mean a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device including but not limited to a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant or pager. Electronic communications include but are not limited to emails, instant messages and communications made by means of an internet website or service.</p> <p><u>Social media</u>: a means of electronic communication utilizing internet websites or services utilizing internet based communication as a means of connecting individuals in a social network. This term should be broadly construed to include both current services (such as Facebook, Snap Chat, Twitter, Instagram and the like) and those developed at a later point.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p>a. General:</p> <p>District employees should remain professional in all electronic communications and should not publicly defame themselves, the District, its students, or stakeholders in any way or in any venue. District employees should not foster, pursue or accept non-professional relationships with students of the District by any means. Teachers should use the greatest amount of care, wisdom and professionalism in their relationships with adult stakeholders and should in all ways promote a positive and professional view of the District through those actions. Except as permitted through other policies, District employees should use their time on District devices and networks legally, productively and for work purposes. Failure to follow the guidelines set forth in this policy shall subject District employees to the appropriate discipline.</p> <p>To the extent that the District is permitted to exert jurisdiction over students, whether for activity conducted during the period from the time the student leaves home to go to school through the time he or she returns at the end of the day, or for speech that is substantially disruptive or is reasonably believed will be substantially disruptive, students are subject to discipline for violations of the guidelines and directives of this policy applicable to them.</p> <p>b. Availability of District sponsored communication tools</p> <p>The District offers communication tools to District employees for use in the classroom and other District approved activities. The District shall maintain an active list of such approved communication tools. Where a District employee wishes to utilize tools that have not yet been evaluated or approved by the District, that employee must follow an administratively approved process to initiate such review in order to</p>

	<p>utilize the desired tool.</p> <p>District employees are to use District provided or approved means of communication when contacting students.</p> <p>c. Examples of electronic communication and social media actions which are prohibited for staff members include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Sending communications to students that are not related to the overall mission of the District.</li><li>ii. Providing a staff member’s personal phone number to a student.</li><li>iii. Placing a call to a student’s personal phone.</li><li>iv. Sending personal or one-to-one electronic messages – instant message, text, SMS, email – to students via an unapproved communication tool.</li><li>v. Emailing students from a staff member’s non-District email account or providing a student with the staff member’s non-District email account.</li><li>vi. “Friending” or otherwise adding students to a District employee’s circle of contacts on an online social networking site whose function does not involved enhancing the educational goals of the District.</li><li>vii. Publicly displaying or posting materials online that would be disruptive to the educational process, including, but not limited to provocative statements, provocative photographs, and/or other public or online activities that would jeopardize the professional nature of the staff-student relationship.</li><li>viii. Using any district device or network to send or attempt to send a communication anonymously or in any manner so as to disguise the identity of the actual sender.</li><li>ix. Representing personal opinions as those of the District.</li><li>x. Disclosing personally identifiable information related to a student, except in strict accordance with Board policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder. In following this directive, District employees should bear in mind that even vague identification of a child may be sufficient to identify the subject child to other children in the class or parents of those children.</li></ul> <p>d. All users while under the authority of the District are deemed to be responsible for their own behavior when communicating on social media. To that end, all such users will be held accountable for their</p>
--	--

conduct and the content of their communications using electronic media – including social media. To that end, Students and District employees are prohibited from:

- i. Bullying, harassing or discriminatory conduct.
  - ii. Using any district device or network to upload, download or otherwise transmit unapproved software or improperly used copyrighted materials.
  - iii. Revealing or publicizing confidential or proprietary information.
  - iv. Using any District device or network to facilitate or participate in social media, except where used for a clear and approved educational purpose.
  - v. Using any District device or network to download files, games, music or video, except as explicitly permitted by District policy and in accordance with Copyright law.
  - vi. Using the District’s name or approved marks or logos in any form of social media except where specifically approved to do so by the Superintendent. In any social media posting by an employee of the District where the account identifies the individual as employed by the District, the employee shall clearly state that the employee is not authorized to speak on behalf of the District, and that the opinions and viewpoints shared are those of the employee only and are not necessarily those of the District.
- e. Examples of uses
- i. Employees should be fair and courteous to their co-workers at the District and students the same towards other students. Inappropriate postings include, but are not limited to, discriminatory remarks, unlawful harassment, postings meant to intentionally harm someone’s reputation, threats of violence, or postings that are intended to intimidate, coerce, or otherwise interfered with someone’s job performance or a student’s educational experience.
  - ii. Employees must maintain the confidentiality of the District’s confidential information and protected information. Such information includes, but is not limited to, information about District students and their families as well as various personnel and other internal matters.
  - iii. Abide by all applicable laws relating to copyrights, fair use, trademarks and other intellectual property, including the District’s intellectual property.
  - iv. When engaging in discussion, comments or other postings online regarding district practices, policies or decisions, Employees must

	<p>clearly state that any opinions expressed are their own rather than the District's. Unless specifically authorized to do so as a component of your approved job responsibilities, a poster is not to use District identification in social media – such as District issued email addresses or District identifying job titles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Pay attention to the accuracy of posted information, and when an inaccuracy is discovered, correct the post quickly.</li> <li>vi. Employees shall maintain a clear separation between any personal use accounts and those used to share or disseminate information about school-related events. All District rules and procedures (e.g., media release approval protocols) apply to the use or sharing of school-related information, and an Employee shall not post photographs, video or audio or any other information relating to any District student or the family of any District student (other than an Employee's own children or family) on any of the Employee's personal accounts.</li> <li>vii. All social media users under the jurisdiction of the District should avoid use of District logos in any instance or other identification that could confuse a reader into believing that the poster is authorized to speak on behalf of the District.</li> <li>viii. No individual should post anything that could reasonably be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating toward any District employee, District student, or any family member of a District employee or student.</li> <li>f. Employees who violate the standards set forth in this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employee violations of this policy may also constitute violations of other relevant District policies with independent disciplinary repercussions. Employees who use social media for illegal purposes are subject to appropriate legal action.</li> <li>g. The District owns all social media accounts created for it, including all log-in information, passwords, content, followers and contacts. This remains true even to the extent that an employee is authorized to post to those outlets on behalf of the District.</li> <li>h. Except for District employees who use social media as part of their job responsibilities, personal use of social media during working hours must be kept to a minimum, and must not interfere with the District's business needs or an employee's job duties.</li> <li>i. As set forth in the District's Acceptable Use policy, District-issued computers, tablets, phones, as well as all other District networking and electronic equipment are the property of the District and, as provided in that policy, the District may monitor communication and data that utilizes or is stored in that equipment. Employees and students should</li> </ul>
--	---

	<p>have no expectation of privacy in any communication or other activity undertaken or transmitted through those devices, including personal social media activities.</p> <p>j. The District may, but is not required to monitor the accessible social media activities of its employees and students to ensure that they comply with these and other applicable District policies. If the District determines that an employee’s use of social media violates the standards set forth in this policy, the District may require that the employee remove the information from public view and may take disciplinary action.</p> <p>k. Students whose actions cause a substantial disruption to the educational mission of the District, and in those instances where such a disruption is reasonably expected to occur, are also subject to appropriate discipline. Additionally, the Administration may require that such students attend additional educational programs related to appropriate online activities.</p>
<p>5. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The Board directs that the Superintendent shall promulgate administrative regulations to effectuate this policy.</p>