

Community Relations

District-Sponsored Social Media

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes the value of technology such as social media platforms in promoting community involvement and collaboration. The purpose of any official District social media platform shall be to further the District's vision and mission, support student learning and staff professional development, and enhance communication with students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop content guidelines and protocols for official District social media platforms to ensure the appropriate and responsible use of these resources and compliance with law, Board policy, and regulation.

Guidelines for Content

Official District social media platforms shall be used only for their stated purposes and in a manner consistent with this policy and administrative regulation. By creating these official sites and allowing for public comment, the Board does not intend to create a limited public forum or otherwise guarantee an individual's right to free speech.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the limited purpose of the official District social media platforms is clearly communicated to users. Each site shall contain a statement that specifies the site's purposes along with a statement that users are expected to use the site only for those purposes. Each site shall also contain a statement that users are personally responsible for the content of their posts.

Official District social media platforms may not contain content that is obscene, libelous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation.

Staff or students who post prohibited content shall be subject to discipline in accordance with District policies and administrative regulations.

Users of official District social media platforms should be aware of the public nature and accessibility of social media and that information posted may be considered a public record subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The Board expects users to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.

Privacy

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the privacy rights of students, parents/guardians, staff, Board members, and other individuals are protected on official District social media platforms.

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Privacy (continued)

Board policy pertaining to the posting of student photographs and the privacy of telephone numbers, home addresses, and email addresses, as specified in other applicable Board policies shall also apply to official District social media platforms.

Social media and networking sites and other online platforms shall not be used by District employees to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or District operations.

- (cf. 1100 – Communications with the Public)
- (cf. 1110.1 – Parent Involvement)
- (cf. 1112 – News Media Relationships)
- (cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Staff Acceptable Computer Use)
- (cf. 4118.51/4218.51 – Social Networking)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension/Expulsion; Due Process)
- (cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.911 – Bullying)
- (cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
- (cf. 5142.2 – Freedom of Expression)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline)
- (cf. 6141.321 – Acceptable Computer Use)
- (cf. 6141.323 – Filtering Access to Electronic Networks)
- (cf. 6141.324 – Posting of Student Work/Photographs)
- (cf. 6141.326 – Online Social Networking)
- (cf. 6145.5 – Student Organization and Equal Access)
- (cf. 9327 – Electronic Mail Communications)

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.

11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations.

46b-56(e) Access to Records of Minors.

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Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)

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.

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)

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THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Thomaston, Connecticut