

RESPONSIBLE USE OF ELECTRONIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Background

The District recognizes that the use of electronic social media is a viable means to enhance learning. The District supports the use of electronic social media to interact knowledgeably and responsibly for this stated purpose. This procedure applies to all District students, staff, and parents' advisory council representatives.

The District has enacted Administrative Procedure 140 – Digital Technology and its associated form of agreement to guide and govern the use of electronic media by students and staff. This Administrative Procedure covers electronic media that may not be specifically referenced in that Procedure.

Definition

Electronic social media refers to electronic access to and use of blogs, personal websites, RSS feeds, postings on wikis and other interactive sites, such as, but not limited to: Facebook, MySpace, Blogger, Twitter, Instant Messaging, and postings on video or picture-sharing sites and elsewhere on the Internet.

Procedures

1. Interactions Representing the District

- 1.1 Unless given written permission from a Principal or supervisor, a user is not authorized to use electronic social media sites to represent a school, parents' advisory council executive, department, or the District.
- 1.2 In cases where a user has sought permission to represent a school, parents' advisory council, department, or District, the user must identify themselves by name and as an employee of the District or parents' advisory council executive.
 - 1.2.1 The signature "New Westminster School District" and/or the District logo needs to appear in the banner for blogs, etc., or in the profile page for social media sites like Twitter.
 - 1.2.2 Access and permission to use the District's logo can be granted by emailing the Secretary-Treasurer.
 - 1.2.3 School logos will not be used without first obtaining written permission from the Principal or supervisor.

- 1.3 Any use of electronic media by a user must be consistent with the duty of loyalty each user owes to the District and must not transgress any law or civil duty of care owed to the District or any other person. Breach of this requirement will be considered to be conduct that is subject to action by the District and the District will take such action as it considers is warranted.
2. Respect, Privacy, and Confidential Information
 - 2.1 Users will not disclose confidential student information, images, or confidential school, department, or personnel records without first obtaining written consent from the Principal, supervisor, and the guardian(s) for students under the age of eighteen (18) who are not independent students, as defined in the *School Act*. Or without first obtaining written consent from the Principal, supervisor, and from a student eighteen (18) years of age or older who is an independent student as defined in the *School Act*.
 - 2.2 Users will not use electronic social media sites to be defamatory or harassing towards any person and will not espouse or support any position or opinion or statement that is contrary to Board policies and District administrative procedures.
 - 2.3 Users will not engage electronically in behaviour or comments that would reflect negatively on a school or the District's reputation or the reputation of any person employed with or holding elected office with the District.
 - 2.4 Users may be disciplined if their social media comments and postings, whether personal or school/District related, are not in compliance with this Administrative Procedure or any other policies or procedures of the District.
 - 2.5 Users participating in social media activities will respect copyright laws, not only in relation to the content produced on the social media sites, but also in relation to the software that enables them to operate.
 - 2.6 Users participating in electronic social media activities acknowledge that all information posted to sites is subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) if that information falls within the ambit of the information protected by and governed by FOIP.
3. Staff-Student Online Correspondence
 - 3.1 Online correspondence between staff and students must be related to course work, or school sanctioned clubs/activities. Social media conversations between a staff member and a parent are subject to the provisions of this Administrative Procedure.
 - 3.2 Principal(s) must approve school-based electronic social media groups that will be supervised and monitored by a teacher from each participating school.
 - 3.3 Principals will have administrative privileges to all school-sanctioned electronic social media groups.

- 3.4 Principals will inform staff members participating in school-created electronic social media groups with students that the ethical standards for the teaching profession apply at all times, whether in a traditional school environment or an online environment.
- 3.5 District staff shall not initiate or accept electronic “friend” invitations from students unless the networking is part of an existing school course or school club structure and at least one (1) other staff member has administrative access to the electronic social media group.

4. Social Media Accounts

- 4.1 Schools, Parent Advisory Councils, departments, or individual staff wanting to create a social media account on behalf of the school/parents’ advisory council must request that a social media page be established under the District’s corporate account.
- 4.2 All accounts can be set up through a formal written request to the Principal.
- 4.3 As a condition of such pages, the Principal or Vice Principal must be one (1) of the two (2) administrators of the account, who holds the responsibility to manage the page, including removing defamatory or inappropriate remarks.

*Reference: Sections 8, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
School Regulation 265/89
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Canadian Criminal Code
Copyright Act*

SD No. 40 (New Westminster)

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Modification to this document is not permitted without prior written consent from SD No. 40 (New Westminster)