

ADMIN PROCEDURES MANUAL
Administrative Procedure 140 – Appendix C

ACCEPTABLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

BACKGROUND

Social Media can be a powerful tool to enhance communication and learning. The District is committed to promoting safe and responsible use of social media by members of the community who utilize it for professional purposes.

This Appendix provides guidelines for professional social media communication among district employees and between staff and students. Student-to-student communication via social media is addressed in each school's code of conduct and Student Technology User Agreements. These guidelines also provide general direction for personal social media use.

DEFINITIONS

Social media refers to any form of online platform or presence that allows interactive communication such as social networks, blogs, internet websites, internet forums, RSS feeds, video or picture-sharing sites or applications. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, Blogger, Twitter, Instant Messaging, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat.

- Professional social media is a school/work-related social media activity created by using a District email account, such as a principal creating a Twitter account for their school or a teacher establishing a blog for their class.
- Personal social media refers to non-school/work-related social media activity using a personal email account, such as staff members establishing a Facebook page for personal use.

PROCEDURES

1. Professional Social Media Use.
 - 1.1. Professional social media sites will only be used for instructional, educational, or extra-curricular program matters.
 - 1.2. All employees engaging in professional social media activities must use their SD40 email address and keep this presence separate from personal social media.
 - 1.3. Staff wishing to interact with students on social media, are encouraged to utilize District-approved tools whenever possible.
 - 1.4. Staff wishing to use social media tools at the classroom level must inform their supervisor before setting up a professional social media presence.
 - 1.5. If approved, the supervisor must be one of the administrators of the social media site.
 - 1.6. Social media users must identify themselves by name and as District staff. The social media site should display the "New Westminster School District" signature and/or the District or School logo.

- 1.7. Users must exercise caution and common sense, maintaining the same standards of professionalism expected in the workplace on professional social media sites.
- 1.8. Users must use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their professional social media sites, and be aware of the limitation of these settings, as private communication can become public. Users are responsible for understanding the rules and regulations of the social media site being utilized.
- 1.9. If a professional social media site requires students to join, the user must obtain the appropriate personal and parental consent and comply with B.C. FOIPPA provisions. Students are to join using their school email accounts, not their personal email accounts.
- 1.10. Users must adhere to guidelines outlined in the Staff (Appendix A) and Student (Appendix B) Technology User Agreements when posting on a professional social media environment.
 - 1.10.1 Personally identifiable student information, including photographs, can only be shared through district or school level accounts.
 - 1.10.2 Users who are administrator(s) of a professional social media site are responsible for monitoring and managing all communication on that site. To the extent possible, it is recommended that default setting for comments be turned off. If comments are enabled, the site administrator must monitor them daily.
 - 1.10.3 The District reserves the right to remove, disable or provide feedback on professional social media sites that do not comply with the law or these procedures.

2. Personal Social Media Use

- 2.1. All users are advised to exercise caution and common sense when using personal social media sites.
- 2.2. It is recommended that users use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal social media sites and understand the limitations of settings, as private communications can become public.
- 2.3. District staff are not to communicate with currently enrolled in New Westminster Schools students on personal social media sites in order to maintain a professional and appropriate relationship.
- 2.4. The posting or disclosing personally identifiable student information or confidential information on personal social media is prohibited.
- 2.5. Personal social media use, including off-hours use, has the potential to disrupt schools or the workplace and may be in violation of Administrative Procedure 140.
- 2.6. All existing Board policies and District procedures and legislation that cover employee conduct may be applicable in the personal social media environment.

3. Additional Information

- 3.1. These procedures are intended to supplement, not supersede, existing Board policies, codes of conduct and District Administrative procedures. Users of personal and professional social media sites must comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and local legislation.

- 3.2. Users may face disciplinary action if their social media comments and postings, whether personal or professional, do not comply with this Administrative Procedure or any other District policies or procedures.

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