

Staff Use of Social Media

Code #522.71

The Tri-County Area School District Board of Education encourages the District's staff to utilize District technology resources and applications (such as social networks, blogs, wikis, internet-based multi-media applications, collaboration tools, and advanced learning management applications) for the purposes of: (1) engaging in professional development and professional collaboration activities; and (2) enhancing student learning and instruction, so long as the use of such tools and applications is consistent with this policy and all other requirements and expectations established by the Board or the District's Administration.

Staff members' activities and conduct while utilizing social media, other "Web 2.0" tools and all other electronic media shall conform to the following standards:

- Conduct him/herself in a courteous and professional manner that is consistent with the District's general rules and expectations for appropriate workplace conduct and acceptable use of technology whenever a staff member is participating in a technology-facilitated communication, collaboration, exercise, or other activity in connection with their responsibilities as a District employee;
- Maintain professional boundaries in all forms of technology-facilitated communication with students including, but not limited to, the consistent use of a formal, courteous, and professional tone and limiting such communication to exchanges that are within the scope of the employee's job responsibilities;
- Regard such tools and applications as an extension of the District's educational curriculum to be used in connection with student learning. Employees shall use such tools and applications to accomplish their assigned duties and responsibilities, not as a forum for self-directed personal expression.
- Request permission from the District Administrator (or designee) prior to utilizing any social media or other electronic media application or tool for instructional purposes. The employee may request a meeting with the District Administrator (or designee) to consider alternative options or the possibility of pursuing a modification or exemption from an applicable policy or rule to enable an innovative and viable project.

All District-provided or District-authorized social media, technology tools and applications are provided to further the mission, vision, goals and policies of the District; and, as such, they remain under the ultimate control of the Board and District

Administration at all times. Employees shall not have an expectation of privacy in connection with their use of any District-related form of electronic media.

When "off duty" or when otherwise using technology resources in their private capacities away from the District, employees are held to the same standards in their public use of electronic media (including, but not limited to, social media) as they are held to in connection with their other off-duty, public conduct. Where there is a sufficient nexus between off-duty conduct and an employee's work-related role and responsibilities, there can be employment-related consequences for off-duty conduct that violates the law, that violates District policy or other work directives, that is harmful to persons in the school community, or that otherwise interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job duties. Accordingly, each employee is responsible for all content appearing on all personal websites and social media accounts maintained or controlled by the employee, and for establishing and monitoring privacy settings on any personal websites and other electronic accounts that are appropriate for the nature of content provided therein.

Prior Approval:	N/A
Attorney Review:	March, 2016.
1st Reading	March 29, 2016
2nd Reading	April 27, 2016