

WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMUNICATIONS

1120

District Use of Social Media

The official District website serves as the primary authorized internet-based presence of the Board of Education and District for the electronic posting and provision of public information about the Board of Education and the District.

As a secondary resource for electronically providing routine public information about the District, the Superintendent of Schools or designee may approve the establishment of one or more District accounts through third-party electronic social media applications. Any such account(s) shall be maintained in a manner consistent with the following requirements, as well as any other standards or rules the Superintendent of Schools or designee may establish:

1. The primary purpose of any District social media account established pursuant to this policy shall be the communication of information from and about the District to school families and the larger community, including communications issued for public relations purposes. Accordingly, any District social media account that may be established shall not serve as a public forum or limited or designated forum for the expression or posting of opinions, concerns, beliefs, or other information.
2. At the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools or designee, the District may choose to use its social media account(s) to include District announcements of the activities and accomplishments of any groups that have been organized primarily to support a school-related purpose, such as parent-teacher organizations and booster clubs, provided that the same standards apply to all such groups when similarly situated. The non-school events, activities, or accomplishments of third-party groups or organizations that are not organized primarily to support a school-related purpose shall not be advertised or promoted through any District social media account(s).
3. Information provided through a District-sponsored social media account shall also be made available on the office District website and/or through other District communications channels.
4. The District's social media account(s) for public communications shall include the display of the District's name; and where technologically feasible, the main account page or specific communications sent through the account shall include the URL of the official District website and the telephone number of the main administrative office of the District.

5. When providing information through any District-sponsored social media account held on a third-party electronic social media application, the employee responsible for managing the account is encouraged to consider whether it is practical to use the social media account to redirect users who are seeking information to the official District website (e.g., using an electronic link) in order to obtain that information.
6. To the extent consistent with the District's policies and notices regarding student directory data and other student records, pictures of individually-identifiable students engaged in school-related activities may be posted or displayed through a District-sponsored social media account. Students may be identified by name for purposes of recognition and awards.
7. The District's social media account(s) for public communications shall not make use of any private or closed networks or groups. Any member of the public interested in accessing the information the District provides through its public information social media account(s) shall be permitted to have such access.
8. Social media application allows public posting, public reply, or other public messaging options to users other than the account holder (i.e., a feature in which comments or other information can be posted by non-District users and displayed through the account for access by other public users). Comments posted deemed inappropriate by the District will be removed.
9. A District-sponsored social media account established through this policy shall not be relied upon to establish compliance with the requirements for giving public notice of Board of Education meetings or meetings of other governmental bodies that fall under the purview of the Board or District. Any notice of such meetings that may be provided through a District-sponsored social media account shall be considered exclusively supplemental in nature.
10. Prior to approving the establishment and use of any District-sponsored electronic social media account under this policy, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall ensure there is a plan in place for managing the records created or maintained through the account.

In the event the Superintendent of Schools or designee approves the establishment of a District/school social media account(s) for public communications pursuant to this policy, the Board shall be informed of that decision.

Except for District/school-sponsored social media accounts that have been approved pursuant to this policy, no District employee, member of the Board, or other person acting as an agent of the District shall establish any account, site, page, blog, or other similar presence on a third-party website or on any other third-party electronic social media application that purports to represent, or that a member of the public would be likely to reasonably believe represents (e.g., due to the manner in which information is presented), an official or authorized account, site, page, blog, or other similar presence of the full Board, the District, any District school, or any District-sponsored program or activity (e.g., athletic teams).

This policy is not intended to address the use of the District's internal technology networks and email system, the District's password-based electronic student information system, the instructional use of the internet, or the use of specific websites or applications for direct instructional or other internal purposes (e.g., staff development). Those issues are governed by separate policies, rules, and/or directives.

Cross Ref:

Policy 5200 – Student Records (Request to Withhold Directory Information Form)

Policy 6500 – Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet Safety For Students, Staff, and Guests

Legal Ref: Wisconsin Statutes 19.31-19.37 (Wisconsin Public Records Law)

Administrative Rule: Social Media Guidelines for Staff, Students, and Community

Adopted: October 13, 2014

Revised and Adopted: August 8, 2016