

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Policy Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 27, 2018
5:00 PM
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of March 3, 2018 Minutes
- III. Policy:
 - a. Boost Club Policy Update
 - b. Social Media Policy Update
 - c. Board of Education Handbook
- IV. Future Items
 - a. Booster Clubs
 - b. Corporate Sponsorship
 - c. High School Graduation Requirements
 - d. Board of Education Handbook
 - e. Student Discipline Policies - Expulsion
- V. Open Discussion/Public Comment
- VI. Adjournment

Future Meetings: April 3, April 24

All meetings will be held at 501 Kings Highway East, Superintendent's Conference Room
Unless otherwise noted.

DRAFT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Tuesday, March 6, 2018
5:00 PM
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room

Minutes

Call to Order 5:03 PM

- Present were Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Jennifer Jacobsen, Jeff Peterson, Colleen Deasy

Approval of February 27, 2018 Minutes

- Approved 3-0

Update on Booster Clubs given by Colleen Deasy

Update on Social Media Policy given by Colleen Deasy

Board of Education Handbook; edits proposed to update handbook.

Future Items:

- Booster Clubs
- Corporate Sponsorship
- High School Graduation Requirements
- Student Discipline Projects – Expulsion

Open Discussion

Vote to adjourn 6:45 PM

STAFF USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

(Background information for Policy Committee)

Social networking presents significant challenges to schools. These challenges are not limited solely to students. The use of social networks by school faculty and staff can provide exciting new ways to collaborate and communicate. Districts use such tools. However, care must be exercised to be sure that such tools are used, especially with students, in ways that are age-appropriate and consistent with the mission of the district and school.

School faculty and staff are expected to behave honorably in both real and online spaces. Activities which are improper, unethical, and illegal or which may cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents/guardians or other members of the school community should be avoided in both physical space and cyberspace.

Determining what communications between teachers and students and teachers and other teachers and individuals, are appropriate, especially through the increased use of electronic devices and social-networking websites. This is an issue that districts nationwide are navigating, with policies ranging from fairly permissive to restrictive. The challenge that is faced in determining policy in this area is the speed with which new technologies are emerging. In addition, recent judicial actions, and guidance promulgated by the NLRA, the Teacher Negotiation Act, and MERA impact actions districts can take against employees' inappropriate use of social media.

Many teachers participate in social networking websites. The district's authority over staff behaviors usually does not extend to off duty hours. However, recent legal disputes indicate that this is changing. Staff members may argue that the district has no control over their off-duty behaviors. However, employee dismissal hearings and some legal decisions have allowed administrators to introduce evidence that off-duty behaviors have negatively influenced a teacher's ability to teach effectively and/or to control their classes after inappropriate materials were posted on the Internet. The scope of privacy expectation is evolving as individuals increasingly rely on technology in their daily lives.

It is important that teachers remember that they are role models and quasi-public figures. In the eyes of the communities and students, they are individuals who should be beyond reproach. An educator means living in the public eye and being held to a higher standard.

The websites and social media sites, per se, are not the problem. Many districts and organizations maintain a social networking presence. Some schools encourage teachers to use such sites to help students. However, education groups do not agree on the best approach to these sites and their use by staff.

A case in Ansonia, Connecticut in 2008 involved a teacher who created a MySpace page to communicate with students. The site had pictures on it of naked men and inappropriate captions. The teacher's contract was not renewed after being placed on leave. His challenge that his free speech rights were violated was not upheld in the U.S. District Court.

In the fast-changing world of social networking, districts will have to continue to adapt to new technologies and the uses to be made of them, and changing judicial decisions regarding the district's ability to regulate or discipline employees for what is posted on such site. The technology is and will be constantly evolving, causing the need for policy direction that will certainly need to be reexamined on a regular basis.

A sample policy to consider.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #1

The Board of Education recognizes that technological resources can enhance employee performance by offering effective tools to assist in providing a quality instructional program, facilitating communications with parents/guardians, students and the community, supporting District and school operations and improving access to and exchange of information. The Board expects all employees to learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources. Further, employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the District's resources primarily for purposes related to their employment. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees or District operations without authority.

Staff members will utilize social network sites, such as but not limited to, Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, judiciously by not posting confidential information about students, staff or District business. Staff members will treat fellow employees, students and the public with respect while posting. Communication with students using personal communication devices will be appropriate, professional and related to school assignments or activities. If communicating with students electronically, staff is expected to use District e-mail using mailing lists to a group of students rather than individual students. Texting students is [discouraged] [prohibited].

The Superintendent and the School Principals shall annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- A. Improper fraternization [inappropriate communications] with students using social networking websites on the Internet.
 - 1. Teachers may not list current students as “friends” on networking sites.
 - 2. All e-contacts with students should be through the District's computer and telephone systems.
 - 3. All contacts by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members.
 - 4. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.
 - 5. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or telephone is prohibited.

- B. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #1 (continued)

- C. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs or alcohol.
- D. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid.
- E. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of District computers and technology.
- F. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. Further, the Board acknowledges that District employees have First Amendment rights, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern.

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct Internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will download the offensive material and determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

- (cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
- (cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
- (cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- (cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
- (cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
- (cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
- (cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

- Legal References:
- Connecticut General Statutes
 - The Freedom of Information Act
 - 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 - 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 - United States Code, Title 20
 - 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
 - United States Code, Title 47
 - 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
 - Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 - 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts
 - U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology) (continued)

Social Networking Websites – Version #2

The Board of Education (Board) strongly discourages District staff from socializing with students outside of school on social networking websites, including but not limited to MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, or dating websites.

All District employees, faculty and staff who participate in social networking websites shall not post any District data, documents, photographs, or other District owned or created information on any website. Further, the posting of any private or confidential District data is strictly prohibited.

School district employees are prohibited from engaging in any conduct on social networking websites that violates the law, Board policies, or other standards of conduct. No conduct may negatively impact or disrupt the educational environment in the school. Employees who violate this policy may face discipline and/or termination, in line with other Board policies, acceptable use agreement, and/or collective bargaining unit agreements, as applicable. [*optional*: A teacher may be recommended for dismissal if he/she has behaved in any unethical or lascivious conduct at any time; if there is a reasonable and adverse relationship between the conduct and the continuing ability of the employee to perform any of his/her professional functions in an effective manner.]

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of approved educational websites if such sites are used solely for educational purposes.

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited/discouraged/limited.

Social Networking Websites – Version #3

Professional standards dictate that an adult should never be alone with a student in an isolated space (e.g., one student, one teacher together in a classroom with the door closed after school operating hours). This is true in online environments as well. Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace are structured to be closed environments, and as such the _____ School District discourages students and teachers/staff from using them to communicate with one another. The District provides websites, blogs, and email for students and teachers to communicate and collaborate. If a student or teacher desires to use a social networking site to communicate and collaborate, the District recommends using the online service Ning or Elgg (education social networks) to create a class social networking site. In such an environment, students and teachers are both protected by the monitoring of oversight of the District.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #3 (continued)

Teachers that feel that “mainstream sites” such as Facebook and MySpace will add educational value that cannot be attained without such sites, should communicate their intentions with their Principal and the parents of their students. Teachers must remember that they should not assume that all students have access to the Internet or to social networking sites, and should not use these as the sole source of communication.

Social Networking Websites – Version #4

All employees, faculty, and staff of the _____ School District who participate in social networking websites such as but not limited to MySpace or Facebook, shall not post any data, documents, photos, or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Employees, faculty and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students. Fraternalization [inappropriate communications] via the Internet between employees, faculty or staff and students is prohibited and a violation of any of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites that are used solely for educational purposes. Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited/discouraged/limited.

Policy adopted:

cps 4/10

rev 4/16

A detailed version of this sample policy to consider.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily employee use of social media, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media that:

1. interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
2. is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abuse, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications to harass coworkers or other members of the school community;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
5. harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community; or
6. violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education therefore adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board of Education employees.

Definitions:

- **Social media** includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.
- **Board of Education** includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites, unless the employee also states that the post is the personal communication of the employee of the school district and that the views posted are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education.
2. Employees must refrain from mentioning other Board of Education employees or other members of the school community (e.g., parents or others) on personal social networking sites, without such individuals' express consent unless the employee is addressing an issue of public concern and the employee's speech falls under applicable constitutional protections pertaining to same.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. Unless given written consent, employees may not use the Board of Education's logo or trademarks on their personal posts. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with individual schools, programs or teams of the school district.
5. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their personal social media posts; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Such posts reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
6. Employees are individually responsible for their personal posts on social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

7. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.
8. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices that are the property of the school district.
9. All posts on personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
10. An employee may not link a personal social media site or webpage to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post Board of Education material on a social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
11. All Board of Education policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. If an employee seeks to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her supervisor prior to setting up the site.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

2. If an employee wishes to use Facebook or other similar social media site to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - a. The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be “closed and moderated.”
 - b. Members will not be established as “friends” but as members of the group list.
 - c. Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator or supervisor). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - d. Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join.
 - e. Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - f. The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - g. The employee’s supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - h. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their social media posts on district-sponsored sites; and to refrain from harassing defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.
4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.
5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any

communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other data devices that are the property of the school district.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

6. All posts on district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purpose.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

- (cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
- (cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
- (cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- (cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
- (cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
- (cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
- (cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
United States Code, Title 20
675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet Safety
United States Code, Title 47
254 Universal Service Discounts (E-rate)
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts
U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted:
cps 3/11
rev 4/16

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

A new policy pertaining to this topic.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking

The Board of Education (Board) has a strong commitment to quality education and the well-being of all students, as well as the preservation of the school district's reputation. The Board believes staff members must establish and maintain public trust and confidence and be committed to protecting all students attending the school district. In support of the Board's strong commitment to the public's trust and confidence, the Board holds all staff members to the highest level of professional responsibility.

Inappropriate conduct outside a staff member's professional responsibilities may determine them as unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position. Staff members should be advised communications, publications, photographs, and other information appearing on social networking sites deemed inappropriate by the Board could be cause for discipline up to and including termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Staff members are advised to be concerned and aware such conduct deemed inappropriate may include, but is not limited to, communications and/or publications using e-mails, text-messaging, social networking sites, or any other form of electronic communication that is directed and/or available to students or for public display or publication.

While the Board respects the right of staff members to use social networking sites, staff members should recognize they are held to a higher standard than the general public with regard to standards of conduct and ethics. It is important that a staff member's use of these sites does not damage the reputation of the school district, employees, students, or their families. Staff members who utilize, post or publish images, photographs, or comments on social networking sites, blogs, or other forms or electronic communication outside their professional responsibilities shall ensure their use, postings, or publications are done with an appropriate level of professionalism and are appropriate conduct for a school staff member. Staff members should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public even without their knowledge or consent.

The school district strongly encourages all staff members to carefully review the privacy settings on social networking sites they use and exercise care and good judgement when posting content and information on such sites. Staff members should adhere to the following guidelines, which are consistent with the District's workplace standards on harassment, student relationships, conduct, professional communication, and confidentiality.

When using personal social networking sites, school staff members:

1. Should not make statements that would violate any of the district's policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment;

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking (continued)

2. Must uphold the district's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about the school district, employees, students, or their families;
3. May not disclose any confidential information about the school district or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individual(s) or organization, including students and/or their families;
4. Shall not use social networking sites to post any materials of a sexually graphic nature;
5. Shall not use social networking sites to post any materials which promote violence;
6. Shall not use social networking sites which would be detrimental to the mission and function of the District;
7. Are prohibited from using their school district title as well as adding references to the District in any correspondence including, but not limited to, e-mails, postings, blogs, and social networking sites unless the communication is of an official nature and is serving the mission of the district. This prohibition also includes signature lines and personal e-mail accounts;
8. Shall not post updates to their status on any social networking sites during normal working hours including posting of statements or comments on the social networking sites of others during school time unless it involves a school project. Employees must seek approval from the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee for such use; and
9. Shall not post or publish any information the Superintendent would deem to be inappropriate conduct by a school staff member.

The Policy of this district is to maintain a level of professionalism both during and after the school day. Any publication through any means of electronic communication which is potentially adverse to the operation, morale, or efficiency of the District, will be deemed a violation of this Policy. If the Board or Superintendent believes that a staff member's activity on any social networking site violates the District's policies, the Board or Superintendent may request that the employee cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the staff member may be subject to disciplinary action.

This Policy has been developed and adopted by this Board to provide guidance and direction to staff members on how to avoid actual and/or the appearance of inappropriate conduct toward students and/or the community while using social networking sites.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking (continued)

- (cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
- (cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
- (cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- (cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
- (cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
- (cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
- (cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

- Legal References:
- Connecticut General Statutes
 - The Freedom of Information Act
 - 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 - 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 - United States Code, Title 20
 - 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
 - United States Code, Title 47
 - 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
 - Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 - 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts
 - U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
 - Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted:

cps 4/16

A version from Stafford to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

The Stafford Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and recognizes and acknowledges that its employees have the right to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media including, but not limited to, social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). However, Stafford Public School employees who engage in personal use of social media should be aware that inappropriate content authored by employees which interferes with the educational mission of the school district is not acceptable and is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
United States Code, Title 20
675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet Safety
United States Code, Title 47
254 Universal Service Discounts (E-rate)
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts
U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted: January 23, 2012
cps 11/12
rev 4/16

STAFFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Stafford Springs, Connecticut

Berlin's version of this policy to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
53A-182b Harassment in the first degree.
31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
U.S. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted: January 27, 2014

cps 3/14
rev 4/16

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Berlin, Connecticut

Another version of this policy.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

The Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and acknowledges that its employees have the right, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media, including social media. The Board of Education also recognizes that inappropriate content authored by employees can interfere with the educational process. Therefore, _____ Public School employees who engage in personal use of social media should be aware that any use which interferes with the educational mission of the district, breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees, or harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community is not acceptable and may be subject to District disciplinary action against the employee.

- (cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
- (cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
- (cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5125 – Student Records)
- (cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
- (cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
- (cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
- (cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal References:

- Connecticut General Statutes
- The Freedom of Information Act
- 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
- 31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exemptions. Civil penalty.
- United States Code, Title 20
- 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
- United States Code, Title 47
- 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
- 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts

Policy adopted:
cps 11/10
rev 4/16

Another version of this policy originally developed by the law firm of Shipman and Goodwin.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of social media for its employees, and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. However, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, when such use:

1. interferes with the work of the school district;
2. is used to harass coworkers or other members of the school community;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
5. disrupts the work of the school district;
6. harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community; or
7. violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education therefore adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board of Education employees.

Definitions:

Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites, unless the employee also states that the post is the personal communication of the employee of the school district and that the views posted are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Definitions (continued)

2. Employees must refrain from mentioning other Board of Education employees or other members of the school community (e.g., parents or others) on personal social networking sites, without such individuals' express consent unless the employee is addressing an issue of public concern and the employee's speech falls under applicable constitutional protections pertaining to same.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. Unless given written consent, employees may not use the Board of Education's logo or trademarks on their personal posts. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with individual schools, programs or teams of the school district.
5. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their personal social media posts; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Such posts reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
6. Employees are individually responsible for their personal posts on social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.
7. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on

school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Definitions (continued)

8. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices that are the property of the school district.
9. All posts on personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
10. An employee may not link a personal social media site or webpage to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post Board of Education material on a social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
11. All Board of Education policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. If an employee seeks to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her supervisor prior to setting up the site.
2. If an employee wishes to use Facebook or other similar social media site to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be "closed and moderated."
 - Members will not be established as "friends," but as members of the group list.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

- Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator or supervisor). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join.
 - Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their social media posts on district-sponsored sites; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.
 4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.
 5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other data devices that are the property of the school district.
 6. All posts on district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purpose.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees
31-51q Liability of employers for discipline or discharge of employee or account of employee's exercise of certain constitutional rights
53a-182 Obstructing free passage: Class C misdemeanor
53a-183 Harassment in the second degree: Class C misdemeanor
53a-182b Harassment in the first degree.
53a-250 Definitions
U.S. Constitution, Amend. I
Connecticut Constitution, Article I, Sections 3,4,14
Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§2510 through 2520

Policy adopted:

cps 11/10

A version of this policy from Region 5 to consider.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

The Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and acknowledges that its employees have the right to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media, including social media.

The Board of Education recognizes that technological resources can enhance employee performance by offering effective tools to assist in providing a quality instructional program, facilitating communications with parents/guardians, students and the community, supporting District and school operations and improving access to and exchange of information. The Board expects all employees to learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources. Further, employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the District's resources primarily for purposes related to their employment. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees or District operations without authority.

In using electronic applications, including but not limited to social network sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, staff members must do so judiciously by not posting confidential information about students, staff or District business. Staff members will treat fellow employees, students and the public with respect while posting. As with any communication with students, e-communication will be appropriate, professional and related to school assignments or activities. Teachers/staff will keep their immediate supervisor informed about electronic applications used for instructional purposes.

The Administration shall annually remind current staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- A. Improper fraternization and/or inappropriate communications/postings with students (or that students or families can access) using social networking websites on the Internet.
 - 1. Staff may not list current Amity students as "friends" on networking sites.
 - 2. Routine e-contacts with students should be through the District's computer system.
 - 3. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or telephone is prohibited.
- B. Prohibition of posting items with sexual content.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites (continued)

- C. Prohibition of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs or inappropriate use of alcohol.
- D. Penalties for improper communication or use of District computers and technology.
 - 1. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the administration will download the offensive material and the Superintendent will determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 - Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 - E-Mail - Electronic Monitoring)
(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 - Acceptable Computer Network Use)
(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)
(cf. 6141.32 - Computer Literacy)
(cf. 6141.321 - Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
(cf. 6141.322 - Websites/Pages)
(cf. 6141.323 - Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
53A-182b Harassment in the first degree.
P.A. 98-142 An Act Requiring Notice to Employees of Electronic Monitoring by Employers.
United States Code, Title 20
675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
United States Code, Title 47
254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts

Policy adopted:

eps 10/11

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

A sample administrative regulation to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Media

The _____ Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in the Board’s policy or these administrative regulations is intended to limit an employee’s right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment in certain circumstances to speak on matters of public concern. However, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees’ personal use of social media, regardless of whether or not the technology used belongs to the District, when such use:

1. Interferes, disrupts or undermines the educational process;
2. Engages in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abuse, discriminatory or threatening or similarity inappropriate;
3. Breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
4. Creates a hostile work environment;
5. Violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations;
6. Disparages the reputation of the school district or district employee; or
7. Is inconsistent with professional codes of conduct.

The _____ Board of Education, therefore, adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board employees.

Definitions

Administration includes the Superintendent or designee;

Social Media includes a variety of online tools and services that allow users to publish content and interact with their audiences. For the purpose of this policy, the terms “social software” and “social media” may be used interchangeably. The rapid growth of technology continuously evolves and it makes it difficult to identify all types of social media.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Definitions (continued)

Examples are social networking sites such as Facebook, Linked In, Google +; blogs and micro-blogs such as Twitter and Tumblr; content sharing sites such as Scribd, SlideShare; and image sharing and videos having sites such as Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, and Pinterest.

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools

If an employee wishes to use social media sites for instruction to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements, etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity, or an official school-based organization, or for an official sports team, regardless of whether or not the technology used belongs to the District, the employee must also comply with the following rules:

- The employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her administrator prior to setting up the site.
- The employee must set up the club, etc., as a group, accessible by all members of the school community. The employee will assume full responsibility for monitoring the social media site. Any changes from the original approved proposal must receive prior approval of the employee's administrator.
- Parents must be permitted to access any pages that their child has been invited to join.
- In the event that the social media site is no longer being utilized, the site manager must close it.
- Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to instruction, the club, activity, organization, or team.
- The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
- Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
- The District reserves the right to direct the employee to close the site in the event of mismanagement, misconduct, misuse or any other behavior addressed by this policy.
- In the event that the employee becomes aware of mismanagement or misuse of the site, he/she will immediately close the site and report the incident to his/her administrator.
- Employees may not link a district-sponsored social media page to any personal social media site or sites not sponsored by the District.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools (continued)

- An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.
- An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district or in a manner that could be construed as such.

In addition to the above Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by the District, the following guidelines apply to Personal Social Media Activity:

1. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. While online and by virtue of being a District employee, the employee may be connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. Therefore, you must ensure that content associated with him/her is consistent with the work he/she does in District in accordance with the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibilities for Educators. Employees must also ensure their profile and related content is consistent with how they wish to present themselves with colleagues, parents, and students. Employees must remember that how they represent themselves online should be comparable to how they represent themselves as a professional person.
2. Employees are required to comply with all Board policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks, or electronic devices when accessing social media sites while on school property. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies and may not interfere with an employee's duties and work.
3. The Administration has the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other district electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using district computers, district cellular telephones or other district information technology, as noted in the Acceptable Use Agreement. All posts on personal social media must comply with Board policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information he/she is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools (continued)

4. Employees are required to maintain professional boundaries with students, parents and colleagues. It is not appropriate for a staff member to “friend” a student or his/her guardian or to establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy, or these administrative regulations, may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with State and federal law.

(cf. 6141.2 - Computer Acceptable Use Policy)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-19(b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records
10-15b Access of parent and guardians to student’s records
10-184 Duties of parents
10-209 Records not to be public
10-220 Duties of Boards of Education
11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents
11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records; State Library Board to adopt Regulations
Section 46b-56(e) Access to Records of Minors
31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees
Section 53a-182b through Section 53a-183, Computer Related Offenses, as amended by Public Act 95-143, An Act Concerning harassment by Computer and Possession of Child Pornography
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.)

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Legal Reference: (continued)

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.

Regulation approved:

cps 4/16

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

A sample administrative regulation to consider/modify.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

District employees are expected to behave honorably in online activities. Activities which are improper, unethical, and illegal or which may cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents or other members of the school community should be avoided in both physical space and cyberspace. To that end, the following guidelines for school employees who use online social networking applications which may be frequented by current or former students are offered.

Guidelines for the use of social networking sites by professional staff:

1. Do not accept students as “friends” on personal social networking sites. Decline any student-initiated friend requests.
2. Do not initiate friendships with students.
3. Remember that people classified as “friends” have the ability to download and share your information with others. Post only what you want the world to see. Imagine your students, their parents, your administrator, visiting your site. It is not like posting something to your web site or blog and then realizing that a story or photo should be taken down. On a social networking site, basically once you post something it may be available, even after it is removed from the site.
4. Do not discuss students or co-workers or publicly criticize school policies or personnel.
5. Visit your profile’s security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to “only friends.” “Friends of Friends” and “Networks and Friends” open your content to a large group of unknown people. Your privacy and that of your family may be a risk.
6. Exercise appropriate discretion when using social networks for personal communications with the knowledge that adult behavior on social networks may be used as a model by students.
7. Understand that the uneven power dynamics of the school, in which adults have authority over former students, continues to shape those relationships.
8. Remind all members of your network of your position as an educator whose profile may be accessed by current or former students, and to monitor their posts to your network accordingly. Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends’ sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site whether posted by you or someone else.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites (continued)

Guidelines for the use of educational networking sites by professional staff:

1. Let your administrator, fellow teachers and parents know about your educational network.
2. When available, use school-supported networking tools.
3. Do not say or do anything that you would not say or do in as a teacher in the classroom. (Remember that all online communications are stored and can be monitored.)
4. Have a clear statement of purpose and outcomes for the use of the networking tool.
5. Establish a code of conduct for all network participants.
6. Do not post images that include students without parental release forms on file.
7. Pay close attention to the site's security settings and allow only approved participants access to the site.

Guidelines for all networking sites by professional staff:

1. Do not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
2. Weigh whether a particular posting puts your effectiveness as a teacher at risk.
3. Due to security risks, be cautious when installing the external applications that work with the social networking site. Examples of these sites are calendar programs and games.
4. Run updated malware protection to avoid infections of spyware and adware that social networking sites might place on your computer.
5. Be careful not to fall for phishing scams that arrive via email or on your wall, providing a link for you to click, leading to a fake login page.
6. If a staff member learns of information, on the social networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines they must report it as required by law.

Regulation approved:

cps 4/10

Berlin's recent version of this administrative regulation to consider/modify.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in the Board's policy or these administrative regulations is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between the Board's policy or these regulations and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy or regulation cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

Definitions

The rapid speed at which technology continuously evolves makes it difficult, if not impossible, to identify all types of social media.

Thus, the term Social Media includes a variety of online tools and services that allow users to publish content and interact with their audiences. By way of example, social media includes:

- 1) social-networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+);
- 2) blogs and micro-blogs (i.e. Twitter, Tumblr);
- 3) content-sharing sites (i.e. Scribd, SlideShare); and
- 4) image-sharing and video-sharing sites (i.e. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, Pinterest).

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media (continued)

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. In order for an employee to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the prior permission of his/her supervisor.
2. If an employee wishes to use social media sites to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, or an official sports team, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be “closed” (e.g. membership in the group is limited to students, parents and appropriate school personnel), and “monitored” (e.g. the employee had the ability to access and supervise communications on the social media site).
 - Parents shall be permitted to access any page that their child has been invited to join.
 - Access to the page may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - The employee responsible for the page will monitor it regularly.
 - The employee’s supervisor shall be permitted access to any page established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to refrain from making harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate statements in their social media communications on district-sponsored sites.
4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other data devices.
6. All communications through district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media page to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. The Board understands that employees utilize social media and the web for personal matters in the workplace. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including a review of employee blogging and personal social media activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices. While the Board reserves the right to monitor use of its computer systems, employees may engage in incidental personal use of social media in the workplace so long as such use does not interfere with operations and productivity, and does not violate other Board policies.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

2. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites in a manner that could reasonably be construed as an official school district communication, unless the employee also states within the communication that such communication is the personal view of the employee of the school district and that the views expressed are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education. An example of such a disclaimer is: "the opinions and views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position or opinion of the school district or Board of Education." For example, except as may be permitted by Board policy, employees may not provide job references for other individuals on social media that indicate that such references are made in an official capacity on behalf of the Board of Education.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, absent an unrelated online relationship (e.g., relative, family friend, or personal friendship unrelated to school), it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. In accordance with the public trust doctrine, employees are advised to refrain from engaging in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications through personal social media. Such communications reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
5. Employees are individually responsible for their personal communications through personal social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's communication through personal social media as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, employees should consider refraining from posting anything that belongs to another person or entity, such as copyrighted publications or

trademarked images. As all of these activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

6. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing personal social media sites through district computer systems. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.
7. All communications through personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
8. An employee may not link a personal social media page to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post official Board of Education material on a personal social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
9. All of the Board of Education's policies and administrative regulations apply to employee use of personal social media in the same way that they apply to conduct that occurs in the workplace and off duty conduct.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of the Board's policy concerning the use of social media or these administrative regulations may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References: U.S. Constitution, Amend. I
Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14
Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-48d
Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-51q
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250
Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§2510 through 2520

Regulation approved: January 27, 2014
cps 7/14

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Berlin, Connecticut