

PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATIONS

STAFF CONDUCT

Employee Use of Social Media

This policy addresses employees' use of publicly available social media networks including: personal Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media.

The use of these media for *personal use* during District time or on District equipment is prohibited. In addition, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws or District policies.

The District recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and e-learning tool. Toward that end, the District provides password-protected social media tools and District-approved technologies for e-learning and encourages use of District tools for collaboration by employees. However, public social media networks (like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.), outside of those sponsored by the District, may not be used for classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities *without the prior written authorization of the Superintendent, or designee, and parental consent for student participation on social networks.*

The line between professional and personal relationships may be blurred within a social media context. When employees choose to join or engage with District students, families or fellow employees in a social media context that exists outside those approved by the District, they are advised to maintain their professionalism as District employees. Employees have responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-student relationships at all times and have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks when observed. This may include acting to protect the safety of minors online via mandatory reporting channels or otherwise.

Employees should not use their District e-mail address for communications on public social media networks that have not been approved by the District.

Employees may not act as a spokesperson for the District or post comments as a representative of the District, except as authorized by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

Employees should check with the publications office to make sure that images of students who will be published have the permission of their parent/guardian to be published before posting pictures of students on social media, *except* for images of students taken in the public arena, such as at sporting events or fine arts public performances.

Employees may not post any nonpublic images of the District premises and property, including floor plans.

An employee who is responsible for a social media network posting that fails to comply with the rules and guidelines set forth in this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including possible termination, in accordance with any applicable law and/or collective bargaining agreement. Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or the content of anything posted on any social media network.

The Superintendent is hereby authorized to promulgate regulations necessary and proper for administering this policy and complying with applicable laws.

Cross Reference:

Policy #9010.2 PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATIONS/PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS/
Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment)

Policy #5500 STUDENT POLICIES/Student Records

Policy #1130 COMMUNITY RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM/Media Relations

Policy #4510.3 INSTRUCTION/INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY/Code of Conduct

Policy #4510.2R, 4510.3, 4510.9 Internet Use and Safety

Policy #5311 STUDENT POLICIES/STUDENT CONDUCT/Student Rights and Responsibilities

Policy #4240 INSTRUCTION/CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT/Curriculum Guides

Presentation: 9/7/16

First
Vote: 9/21/16

Second
Vote: 10/5/16

WEST GENESEE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS ON EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

These are the guidelines for social media use by West Genesee Central School District employees. If you are an employee contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media both on and off the District network—these guidelines apply to you. We expect all who participate in social media to understand and follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could put you at risk. These guidelines will evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge—so check back once in a while to make sure you are up to date.

It's your responsibility. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. If it seems inappropriate, use caution. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't shrug it off and hit 'send.' Take time to review these guidelines and try to figure out what's bothering you and fix it. If you are still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your supervisor. Ultimately, what you publish is your responsibility. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Trademark, copyright, and fair use requirements must be respected.

Protect confidential information. Be thoughtful about what you publish. You must make sure you do not disclose or use confidential information. Students and parents should not be cited or referenced without their approval. Before posting pictures of students on social media, check with the publications office to make sure that the students who will be published have the permission of their parent/guardian to be published.

It is acceptable to discuss general details about projects, lessons, or events and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for an individual (e.g., Teacher A) so long as the information provided does not make it easy for someone to identify the individual or violate any privacy laws.

Perception can be reality. In online networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a District employee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about the District by community members, parents, students, and the general public; and you are creating perceptions about yourself with your colleagues and managers. If you choose to join or engage with District students and families in a social media context, do so in a professional manner, ever mindful that in the minds of students, families, colleagues and the public, you are a District employee. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with the District's professional standards.

Be a positive role model. The line between professional and personal relationships may be blurred within a social media context. Educational employees have a responsibility to maintain appropriate employee-student relationships, whether on or off duty. Both the law and public expectations hold educational employees to a higher standard of conduct than the general public.

Don't forget your day job. You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job. Remember that District technologies are provided for educational use. Use of social media for personal use during District time or on District equipment is prohibited.