

Kimberly School District
PERSONNEL 5290
Employee Use of Social Media Sites, Including Personal Sites

Because of the unique nature of social media and the District's desire to protect its interest regarding electronic records, the following has been established to address social media usage by all employees:

Confidential and Proprietary Information

Employees shall not post confidential or proprietary information about the District, its employees, students, agents, or others. The employee shall adhere to all applicable privacy and confidentiality policies adopted by the District or as provided by State or federal law.

Personal Use of the District's Name, Logos, or Image

Employees shall not use District logos, images, iconography, etc. on personal social media sites. Nor shall employees use the District name to promote a product, cause, political party, or political candidate. Nor shall employees use educational images of students, names, or data relating to students, absent written authority of the parent of a minor or authority of an adult or emancipated student. As it is understood that district employees may interact with students in personal situations such as birthday parties, social gatherings etc., use caution when posting images from these events.

Respect District Time and Property

Personal use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties, negatively impact job performance, or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.

On Personal Sites

If an employee identifies themselves as a District employee online, it should be clear that the views expressed, posted, or published are personal views, not necessarily those of the District, its Board, other employees, or agents. Opinions and content expressed by staff on social media have the potential to be disseminated far beyond the speaker's desire or intention and could undermine the public perception of fitness of the individual to educate students, and thus undermine teaching effectiveness. In this way, the effect of the expression and publication of such opinions could potentially lead to disciplinary action being taken against the staff member, up to and including termination or nonrenewal of the contract of employment.

Keep Personal and Professional Accounts Separate

Staff members who decide to engage in professional social media activities will maintain separate professional and personal email addresses. Staff members will not use their District email address for personal social media activities. Use of District email for this purpose is prohibited and will be considered a violation of District policy that may result in disciplinary action.

Contact with Students

Although it is desired that staff members have a sincere interest in students as individuals, partiality and the appearance of impropriety must be avoided. Pursuant to the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators, individuals shall maintain a professional relationship with all students, both inside and outside of the classroom. Excessive informal or social involvement with students is therefore prohibited. This includes:

1. Listing current students as "friends" on social media sites wherein personal information is shared or available for review which results in the certificated professional employee not maintaining the Code of Ethics requiring professional relationships with students both inside and outside the classroom;
2. Contacting students through electronic means other than those approved by the District/administration.
3. Giving private cell phone or home phone numbers to students without prior approval of the District/administration.

Nothing in this policy prohibits District staff and students from the use of District/Administrator approved education websites or use of social media created for curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular purposes where the professional relationship is maintained with the student.

Failure to maintain a professional relationship with students, both inside and outside of a classroom setting, including interaction via social media of any nature, e-mailing

texting, or any other electronic methods will result in the required reporting of such conduct to the Professional Standards Commission by the District's Administration.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

If an employee wishes to use social media as a communication means 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:

1. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such District-sponsored social media activities. This includes maintaining a separation between the school activity pages and employees' personal social media profiles and pages;
2. Anyoneshall report anycommunications they believe to be inappropriate toDistrict administration;
3. The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly;
4. No images of students on the media opt-out list will be used;
5. Postings made to the site must comply with the District's Policy 5335 Employee Use of Electronic Communications Devices; and
6. The District Administration reserves the right to shut down or discontinue the group if he or she believes it is in the best overall interest of the student.

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on:

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Think Before Posting and Remember Your Audience

Privacy does not exist in the world of social media; therefore, the District recommends that employees consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known. Public persona is representative of our district and patrons. Search engines can retrieve posts years after they are created, and comments can be easily forwarded or copied. Be aware that a post on social media is easily available to the public at large. This includes students, fellow employees, and peers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not unnecessarily alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

Contact with Students

Pursuant to the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators, individuals shall maintain a professional relationship with all students, both inside and outside of the classroom. In order to avoid the appearance of partiality or impropriety, all electronic communications with students should be through the official District e-mail or your work phone. Do not list current students as friends on social media, do not give students your personal e-mail address or phone number, and do not text students.

Keep Personal and Professional Use Separate

Staff members who decide to engage in personal social media activities will maintain separate professional and personal email addresses. Staff members will not use their District email address for personal social media activities. Such uses will be considered a violation of District policy and may result in disciplinary action. The District reserves the right to monitor communications transmitted and received through the District network. This may include social media messages and updates sent to a District e-mail account.

District Social Media Sites

Notify the District: Employees that have or would like to start a school social media page should contact their administrator or designee. All District pages must have an appointed employee who is responsible for content. Districts should outline the duties of the employee responsible for the site, including how often the site must be checked for comments and who is allowed to post to the site. The administration reserves the right to shut down or discontinue the site if he or she believes it is in the best overall interest of the students.

Have a Plan: Districts should consider their messages, audiences, and goals as well as their strategy for keeping information on social media sites up to date, accurate, and in the best interest of the students. User/login information will be housed with each building's administrative office. Social media will portray the district in a positive manner through celebrating achievements and communicating with patrons.

Employee posts on District affiliated social media sites should remain professional. Carefully consider the naming of pages or accounts, the selection of pictures or icons, compliance with District policy and State and federal laws regarding student and employee confidentiality and the determination of content.

Procedure History:

Promulgated on:

Revised on: