

# STAFF

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Washington Elementary School District supports the use of online social media to facilitate District programs, departments and school sites in building a more successful parent, community, student and employee network. This document contains Washington Elementary School District's guidelines regarding the use of online social media.

### A. Definitions:

"Social Media" includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the Internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. These websites not only provide information, but allow for interaction during this informational exchange through user-generated content.

"Technology" includes computers, notebooks, the Internet, telephones, cellular telephones, personal digital assistants, pagers, MP3 players, such as iPod's, USB drives, wireless access points (routers), or any wireless communication device.

"District Technology" is that which is owned or provided by the District.

"Personal Technology" is non-district technology.

### B. Official District Social Media Presence

These guidelines are tailored primarily to social networking sites. Some examples include:

- Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>)
- Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/>)
- Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com>)
- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>)
- LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>)
- Blogs (Web Logs)
- Any district social media site

### C. Requisite Authorization

1. **Authorization** - District presence on any social media site, including school-related accounts, such as clubs, teams, field trips, course, or other sites associated with the District or a District school must be authorized by the Digital and Crisis Communications Coordinator or designee. Any sites, accounts, or

pages existing absent prior authorization will be subject to review, editing, and removal. As appropriate, a recommendation for disciplinary action may result.

To request permission for a District-related site, please utilize the following form and identify a “content owner,” or individual responsible for performing regular monitoring and maintenance of the website or account, and a responsible administrator assigned to the specific site. Please note that for emergency purposes only, each District-affiliated site or social media account must name the District’s Communications Department as an administrator. However, the site, specifically, the content owner and responsible administrator shall be responsible for monitoring and maintaining these sites and accounts.

**2. Foundation and PTA Sites** - Authorized school websites shall maintain a clear separation from the website of their school foundation or parent-teacher group. However, a link to the school foundation or parent-teacher group website is permissible. Principals direct certain aspects of foundation and PTA websites, including, but not limited to, directing that District policies regarding fundraisers and fees be properly reflected on the website.

**3. District Logo** - The use of the Washington Elementary School District logo(s) on a social media site must be approved by the Communications Department. For approved logo use, follow Washington Elementary School District Logo Guidelines established by the Communications Department.

**4. General District Sites and Accounts** - The District’s general social media sites, including the District’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, will be managed by the Communications Department. Duplicate, unofficial sites shall be reported, and investigated.

**5. Sponsors and Advertising** - Sponsor logos are permissible on District-related websites, with the prior approval of the site administrator. The page must also include or link to contact information for an individual who can provide information about sponsorship. Advertising for third-party events or activities unassociated with official District business is strictly prohibited.

**Content Disclaimer** – Any approved official presence on social media sites outside of those created and monitored by the District’s Communications Department shall include the following text:

“The views expressed on this site do not reflect the views of the Washington Elementary School District. This site contains user-created content which is not endorsed by the District. The purpose of this site is”...(then specify the purpose).

## **D. Maintenance and Monitoring Responsibilities**

Content Owners are responsible for monitoring and maintaining official presences on

social media sites as follows:

1. Content must conform to all applicable state and federal laws, as well as all District and Board policies and administrative procedures.
2. Content must be kept current and accurate, refreshed at least weekly, following Washington Elementary School District Website Guidelines and Policies established by the Communications Department.
3. Content must not violate copyright or intellectual property laws and the content owner must secure the expressed consent of all involved parties for the right to distribute or publish recordings, photos, images, video, text, slideshow presentations, artwork or any other materials. Before posting any photographs of students, content owners shall review the list of students whose parents have not consented to having their child's photograph taken or published. No student photographs should be published for personal, promotional use or any other nonschool related purpose.

The Communications Department recommends that content owners request that a second person review all photographs prior to publication. One person may catch issues that the first set of eyes overlooked.

4. All postings and comments by users are monitored and responded to as necessary on a regular basis. Postings and comments of an inappropriate nature or containing information unrelated to official or District business should be deleted promptly. Such postings shall be reported, investigated, and authors will be disciplined as appropriate.

#### **E. Off-Campus versus On-Campus Social Media and Internet Use Guidelines**

Although staff members enjoy free speech rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, certain types of communication, typically by virtue of their subject-matter connection to campus, may relate enough to school to have ramifications for the author or subject at the District site.

When using District technology, electronic communication is governed by the District Acceptable Use policy, which will be enforced accordingly. Students and staff should not expect privacy in the contents of their personal files on the District's Internet system or other District technology, including e-mail. District technology may only be used for educational purposes. Use for entertainment purposes, such as personal blogging, instant messaging, online shopping or gaming is not allowed. The use of District technology is a privilege, not a right.

Use of personal technology/devices may violate the District's acceptable use policy if the District reasonably believes the conduct or speech will cause actual, material disruption of school activities or a staff member's ability to perform his or her job duties.

Off-campus Internet usage is largely unrelated to school; however, in certain circumstances courts have held that the off-campus online communications may be connected enough to campus to result in either student or staff-member discipline.

This section of the guidelines is intended to present to District staff members examples of such situations, and guidelines for responsible, ethical Internet use.

## 1. Staff Use of Personal Technology

- a. **Limit On-Duty Use** – Staff members are encouraged to limit their personal technology use during duty hours. Use of Personal Technology for non-District business should be limited to off-duty time and designated breaks.
- b. **Work/Personal Distinction** – Staff members are encouraged to maintain a clear distinction between their personal social media use and any District-related social media sites.
- c. **Student Photographs** – Absent parent permission for the particular purpose, staff members may not send, share, or post pictures, text messages, e-mails or other material that personally identifies District students in electronic or any other form of Personal Technology. Staff members may not use images of students, e-mails, or other personally identifiable student information for personal gain or profit.
- d. **Professional Effectiveness** - District employees must be mindful that any Internet information is ultimately accessible to the world. To avoid jeopardizing their professional effectiveness, employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the privacy policies, settings, and protections on any social networking Web sites to which they choose to subscribe and be aware that information posted online, despite privacy protections, is easily and often reported to administrators or exposed to District students.
- e. **Personal Social Networking & Media Accounts** – Before employees create or join an online social network, they should ask themselves whether they would be comfortable if a 'friend' decided to send the information to their students, the students' parents, or their supervisor. Educators must give serious thought to the implications of joining an online social network.
- f. **Responsible Online Identity Monitoring** – Employees are encouraged to monitor their 'online identity,' by performing search engine research on a routine basis in order to prevent their online profiles from being fraudulently compromised or simply to track information posted about them online. Often, if there is unwanted information posted about the employee online, that employee can contact the site administrator in order to request its removal.
- g. **Friending District Students** – Employees should not have online interactions with students on social networking sites outside of those forums dedicated to academic use. District employees' social networking profiles and personal blogs should not be linked to District students' online profiles. Additionally, District employees should use appropriate discretion when using social networks for personal communications and should limit this activity to off-duty hours and the use of their own electronic communication devices.

- h. Contacting Students Off-Hours** – When in doubt about contacting a District student during off-duty hours using either District-owned communication devices, network services, and Internet access route or those of the employee, begin by contacting the student's parent(s) or legal guardian through their District registered phone number. District employees should only contact District students for educational purposes and must never disclose confidential information possessed by the employee by virtue of his or her District employment.

Because online content can be spread in mere seconds to a mass audience, the District encourages employees to ask themselves before posting any information online whether they would be comfortable having this information printed in the newspaper alongside their photo.

# SOCIAL MEDIA SITE AUTHORIZATION FORM

Employees of Washington Elementary School District who wish to create and maintain an official District or school presence on any social media site must have a copy of this completed form on file in the school/department supervisor's office, and a copy submitted to the District's Communications Department, prior to a social media site's activation. Either a hard copy or .pdf copy filed electronically is acceptable. Note: Once authorized by a school principal or department supervisor, the social media site administrator and their supervisor are fully responsible for regular monitoring of the site, appropriate online conduct and adhering to the District's official Social Media Guidelines. Any changes to the site coordinator or purpose of the site must be reported to the Communications Department.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept. or School Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Title: \_\_\_\_\_ District e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of request:

- Website/page: \_\_\_\_\_
- Blog: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of presence on social media site: \_\_\_\_\_

## SITE ACCOUNT INFORMATION:

E-mail address associated with site: \_\_\_\_\_

User name: \_\_\_\_\_ Password: \_\_\_\_\_

All individuals with site account access:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## AUTHORIZATION BY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR DEPARTMENT SUPERVISOR:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*New Facebook sites must be created as a "Business" or "Place" – "Personal" sites are not acceptable for conducting official District or school business. As a requirement, the District Communications Department must be named as a site administrator by granting administrator access to: \_\_\_\_\_, only for the purpose of emergency access. The social media site's administrator and school*

*principal/department supervisor are 100% responsible for monitoring the site and adhering to the district's official Social Media Guidelines.*