

STAFF USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AND OTHER FORMS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Statement of Use

The District promotes all staff to utilize social media tools to teach, communicate, and bring the real world into the classroom. It supports uses of current technology in ways that promote, support, and maintain strong, appropriate relationships between staff and students.

Staff is encouraged to use District-provided accounts such as teacher blogs to communicate with students, not their personal networking sites. To protect all parties, it is important that staff, students, and parents understand the boundaries of professional decorum in the use of ever-changing on-line, digital learning possibilities. Staff must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process and in ways that protect students and staff members alike from inappropriate use or the appearance of inappropriate use.

The District's expectation is that staff will use maturity, common sense, and sound professional judgment in all interactions with students, parents, and community members.

Student Photographs

The Waterloo Community School District notifies all parents of current students officially through our Release of Student Directory Information and student handbooks that students are potentially subject to having their photographs displayed on our official school website (www.waterloo.k12.ia.us) solely for educational purposes. Student photographs may also be posted within our school district's official social media pages unless parents mark they do not want their child's photo to be displayed at school, in any school publication, or in any public newspaper article related to school activities. This option can be found on the Release of Student Directory Information Form. A student's photograph or exemplary classroom project may be posted, but the District will be careful not to associate a student's full name in such a way that it can be identified with a photograph of a student, unless a parent/guardian is contacted directly about this instance and gives permission in writing.

Practical Guidelines

1. District employees are encouraged to not "friend" or follow their students on any personal social media outlet.
2. Staff members are encouraged to use District-provided accounts to create a classroom presence or site for legitimate educational purposes (separate from personal sites).
 - a. District staff can use social media outlets for educational purposes as long as they use a separate account for personal use.
3. Postings that contain content that disrupts the educational program are strictly prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to content that:
 - a. is sexually provocative or flirtatious in nature;
 - b. exhibits or advocates for use of drugs and alcohol;
 - c. would be defined by a reasonable person as obscene, racist, or sexist;

- d. promotes illicit, illegal, or unethical activity;
- e. violates the district's affirmative action and/or bullying and harassment policies.

Security

Waterloo Community Schools do not, at any time, have or are able to gain access to anyone's social media profile, inclusive of current students and minors, when individuals become official fans of our face book page. Additionally, Waterloo Schools reserves the right to remove fans from our official social media pages for any reason including what our organization deems to be inappropriate commenting, inappropriate picture or video posting, etc. By participating with any Waterloo Community Schools official social media pages, depending on your personal account and privacy settings, you may be subject to having your profile picture, name, and comments visible to the public. Waterloo Community Schools does not take responsibility for such actions because such settings are only within the control of the account holder that is a fan of our page, not the Waterloo Community Schools.

Legitimate Educational Purposes

As used in this policy, legitimate educational purposes include:

1. Answering academic inquiries regarding homework, other classroom work or assignments;
2. Scheduling appointments for school-related conferences and/or extra help;
3. Clarifying classroom expectations and/or assignments;
4. Notifications related to classroom, club or sports schedules, safety, attendance, events, trips, assignments, and/or deadlines.

Consequences

Failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct can lead to discipline up to and including suspension and dismissal from employment. When inappropriate use of electronic contacts is suspected, administrators will immediately investigate. Misconduct that rises to the level of criminal activity will be reported to law enforcement. Misconduct that violates professional ethics will be reported to the Board of Educational Examiners.

Implementation

This policy shall be contained in all staff handbooks and posted on the District website under our policies section.

Legal Ref.: Iowa Code §§ 274.1, .2, .6, .7; 278.1(9); 279.8; 594A (2009).

ADOPTED: 2/14/11

Reviewed: 1/6/11