

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Trustees

Twin Falls School District 411

From: Eva Craner, Director of Public Relations

Re: Policy Updates

Date: Aug. 7, 2017

Second Reading:

Administration recommended changes:

5325 Employee Use of Social Media Sites, Including Personal Sites

Supporting Documents: TFSD Social Media Guidelines

TFSD Social Media Use Form

Because of the unique nature of social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, and because of the District's desire to protect its interest with regard to its electronic records, the following rules have been established to address social media site usage by all employees:

Protect 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.

Do Not Use District Name, Logos, or Images

Employees shall not use the District logos, images, iconography, etc. on personal social media sites. Nor shall employees use the District name to promote a product, cause or political party, or political candidate. Nor shall employees use personal images of students, or names or data relating to students, absent written authority of the parent of a minor or authority of an adult or emancipated student.

Limited Use of Social Media for Personal Purposes

Employees will use personal e-mail and social media only during non-work times, such as during lunch or before or after school. Any 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 you identify yourself 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, employees, or agents.

Opinions expressed by staff on a social networking website 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 and/or social involvement with students is therefore prohibited. This includes:

- Listing current students as “friends” on networking 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;
- Any communication that does not have an educational purpose and is not professional in content and tone between a district employee and a student via telecommunications, text messages, e-mails, and/or any other medium.
- Inappropriate contact of any kind including via electronic media.

Nothing in this policy prohibits District staff and students from the use of education websites and/or use of social networking websites 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 networking websites 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 Facebook, Twitter, or other similar 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, the employee must also comply with the following rules:

- The employee must set up the social media page or account club, etc., as a group list which will be “closed and moderated.” only after discussing the purpose for the page or account with their supervisor.
- The employee must set up mechanisms for delivering information to students that are not members of the group via non-electronic means.
- Members will not be established as “friends” but as members of the group list or “followers” of a fan page.
- ~~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. Parents shall report any communications they believe to be inappropriate by students or school personnel to District Administration.
- 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. This includes maintaining a separation between the school activity pages and employees' personal social media profiles and pages.
- Postings made to the site must comply with the District's Computing Device and Network Acceptable Use Policy.
- The Superintendent reserves the right to shut down or discontinue the group if he/she believes it is in the best overall interest of the students.
- The employee will review the TFSD Social Media Guidelines on an annual basis.
- The employee will register the social media page/account with the TFSD Social Media Use form found on the website.

Cross Reference: Policy #2960 Computing Device and Network Acceptable Use Policy

Legal Reference: Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators

Policy History:

Adopted on: **8/11/14**

ISBA

Revised on:

Twin Falls School District Social Media Guidelines for Employees

The Twin Falls School District is committed to providing a quality education necessary for students to be successful in life. As part of this commitment, the district recognizes that engaging and effective communication with stakeholders is necessary to become a district of choice. Many of our staff, students, parents, and community members are active social media users both professionally and in their private lives. To reach its goals the TFSD incorporates social media as part of its communication strategy and supports its responsible use at all levels.

The purpose of these guidelines is to help you participate online in a respectful, relevant way that protects your reputation and the reputation of the Twin Falls School District. The TFSD respects the right of students, employees, alumni, and other members of our community to use these technologies and in no way intends to limit or infringe upon your rights.

For the purpose of this document, social media includes, but is not necessarily limited to, social networking and media sharing sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, Tumblr, Instagram, Snap Chat, and YouTube. It also includes blogs, comments on websites, discussion forums, and other activity online involving connecting or communicating with others.

These guidelines are meant to complement, but not replace, any existing policies regarding use of technology, computers, email and the internet that are in place in the Twin Falls School District. Please see Policy Numbers 5325 and 2960.

Your Personal Responsibility

The TFSD respects the right of employees to use social media and networking sites as well as personal websites and blogs. We ask that you carefully consider the very public forum you are participating in and act in a way that properly represents both your professional reputation and the TFSD. Employees should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior and understand that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public and can do damage to the district's reputation, its employees, or its students and families. Avoid posting, sharing, communicating, or otherwise engaging in rumors or unsupported information. Your posts and comments should help build and support the school community. The TFSD has established these guidelines to help you participate in the digital world in a responsible manner. When doing so always keep in mind:

- Use common sense when posting online. These guidelines in no way intend to limit or infringe on your rights. At the same time, the TFSD asks that you use common sense regarding posts on your personal accounts that mention the TFSD and/or your workplace. It remains good practice to refrain from posting anything that would embarrass the TFSD, or that would call your professional reputation into question.

- You are personally responsible for the content you publish online. “Content” includes personal comments, links, photographs, audio or video, and content created by others that you choose to share or re-post.
- Be mindful that the content you publish will be public for a long time. And, always bear in mind that once posted, you cannot take it back. Most social media channels give you the option to delete content or make it private. In most cases, this doesn’t mean the post disappears. Deleted content can still show up in online searches. Or, with the click of a button, other users can take a screenshot, re-post, or share your content with others. Even if you share your content with a very limited number of people, nothing prohibits your contacts from sharing the information you post. Employees should be aware that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without the employee’s full knowledge or consent.

Teacher-Student Relations

The TFSD recognizes the role that communication and collaboration between employees and students plays in the educational process and experience. The district further recognizes that the advancement of electronic communication and social media technologies creates greater opportunity for interactions between employees and students, and provides these additional guidelines for your own and our students’ protection:

- Employees are never under any obligation to accept friend or follow requests from any student or to use personal social media accounts to engage with students or participate in district projects.
- Do not post photos or videos that contain identifying information concerning any students without prior parental consent. Doing so could violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The TFSD manages a list of students who have opted-out of involvement on TFSD sponsored social media under FERPA. Contact the Public Relations Director to learn how you can post about education without violating FERPA.
- Any employee-student communications via social media should be of an appropriate professional nature, have content that is appropriate for both the communications medium and the audience addressed, and must not violate any provisions of the FERPA. With each communication, ask yourself if it’s something you would feel comfortable being printed in the newspaper, read by parents, colleagues, or the school board. As with content, always assume any communication can easily end up in the public realm. This is as much for your protection as the students. Any content or communication generated either by you or by the student, which would be inappropriate in the classroom should also be considered inappropriate when shared via social media.

Teacher-Parent/Community Relations

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the online world. When you are online, you may be connected to colleagues, former students, parents, and the school community. Sometimes those connections may be direct and obvious, like being “Facebook Friend”. Other times the connections may be indirect or through mutual acquaintances. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your professional life and your work at the TFSD.

- Use your personal email addresses on social networking sites and while engaging in other off-duty social media activities. At no time should you claim to be speaking or issuing opinions on behalf of the TFSD. In instances where there could be confusion, you must make it clear the views and content are exclusively your own and do not represent the TFSD.
- Special care should be taken when posting photographs. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality and professional reputation. All photographs should be posted with the assumption that they could end up in the public realm.
- As an employee of the district, content you post should not include provocative photographs, sexually explicit messages, content showing or promoting the excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol or use of drugs, or any activity students are legally prohibited from doing. Remember, even with privacy setting in place, your content could be seen by students or parents or find its way into the public realm.

Twin Falls School District Sponsored Social Media Sites

As outlined in TFSD Policy No. 5325 if an employee wishes to use Facebook, Twitter, or other similar 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-organization, the employee must also comply with the following rules:

- The employee must set up the club as a group list which will be “closed and moderated.”
- The employee must set up mechanisms for delivering information to students that are not members of the group via non-electronic means.
- Members will not be established as “friends” but as members of the group list.
- Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by 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. Parents shall report any communication they believe to be inappropriate by students or school personnel to District Administration.
- 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. This includes maintaining a separation between the school activity pages and employees' personal social media profiles and pages.
- Postings made to the site must comply with the District's Computing Device and Network Acceptable Use Policy.
- The Superintendent reserves the right to shut down or discontinue the group if he/she believes it is in the best overall interest of the students.

Social Media Use Form

Information sharing and authorization:

Those employees wishing to create and maintain a Facebook or other social media profile as a part of their job should complete the information sharing form below. (This includes pages for classes, teams, organizations or groups of parents and/or students. It does NOT include personal profile pages.)

Employees setting up and/or maintaining a Facebook page or group also agree to add a supervisor and/or Eva Craner, director of public relations, as an administrator for the page. In case of emergency that prevents you from being able to access your page, this will ensure timely and accurate information is shared with your followers. Adding a page administrator is simple.

Completing this form will connect you with social media champions in our district and will allow the district to maintain a central directory of social media profiles in our schools to help parents and patrons.

* Required

1. My Name *

Please provide you first and last name.

2. My email address *

3. I plan to represent the following class/team/club/building/etc. on social media *

4. The social media tool I intend to use is *

Mark only one oval.

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Other:

5. The url for my page (or my Twitter and/or hashtag) where someone can find it is: *

6. Here is a description of the type of information or content I plan to share on my site: *

7. I plan to use the following privacy structure for my page. *

Mark only one oval.

- Open public access to view and post
- Open public access to view, with no ability to post
- Viewing access limited only to invited members (private Facebook group)
- Other: _____

8. I affirm that I have read and understand Policy 5325 - Employee Use of Social Media Including Personal Sites and the TFSD #411 Social Media Guidelines for Employees. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

9. I acknowledge that I will be solely responsible for managing the information and posts on my page. I also affirm that I intend to give one of my supervisors, and/or Eva Craner, administrator-level access to my page, group or account to assist in case of emergency. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
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