

SAYDEL COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Saydel Community School District recognizes and encourages the use of social media as an educational and communication tool. The district also recognizes that the lines between personal use and school use of social media can be confusing.

In all instances it is important that employees conduct themselves in such a way that their personal or school use of social media does not adversely affect their position with the district. Just as the district encourages the use of social media, the district also encourages employees to use good and sound professional practice when using social media.

The purpose of this policy is to establish protocols for the use of social media by staff and to outline expectations for its use. These protocols are in place regardless of whether access to any social media is through a district-owned computer. For purposes of this policy, "social media" is any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication and includes, but is not limited to, social networking websites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, or similar sites now or in the future. In addition, personal web pages or blogs, educational networking sites and electronic messaging fall under this policy.

Advice for the use of social media in employee's personal life:

- Employees should carefully consider the pros and cons, potential difficulties and additional responsibilities that may be involved if they accept current Saydel Community School District students as "friends" or "follow" them on social media.
- Employees are encouraged to create school-specific social media addresses, rather than personal addresses, when utilizing social media to communicate with students.
- Employees are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their communications with students. Employees should understand that they are personally responsible for the content they publish on user-generated media.
- Employees should be aware that social media sites can change their privacy policies and standards at any time, possibly exposing posts employees thought were private to the public. Employees should consider that what they publish may be public for a long time. Employees should set and maintain appropriate social networking privacy settings.
- Employees should be careful about the type and amount of personal information they provide on social media.

Expectations for the use of social media in employee's work:

- Employees may create a social media site for a school, class or program only with prior approval from the employee's supervisor. Whenever possible, employees are encouraged to use district-provided student learning platforms such as the school website, PowerSchool, and Schoology.

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EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTINUED

- Behavior that is inappropriate in the classroom or in other face-to-face interactions at school should likewise be considered inappropriate online.
- Employees accessing social media through a district-owned computer or other electronic device or network are subject to applicable laws and district policies and rules regarding acceptable use of such district-owned resources. It is a violation of Iowa Code to use district equipment or media sites to advocate for or against political candidates or initiatives.
- Expectations for all use of social media by an employee: Use of social media while on duty is prohibited unless the employee is engaged in school-related business.
- Only pre-determined staff members are to act as representatives of or spokespersons for the district.
- Employees should be aware that social media activity can impact their employment, such as if that activity is illegal, in violation of board policies, has a negative impact on the efficient operation of the school district, or impacts the ability of an individual to do or return to his/her job. Employees should consider whether a particular posting puts their professional reputation and effectiveness as a district employee at risk.
- Sharing of information via social media that impedes or interferes with an ongoing or current investigation by district officials regarding an employee or student is prohibited.
- Employees may not submit or post confidential or protected information about the district, its students, alumni or employees. Disclosure of confidential or protected information may result in liability for invasion of privacy or defamation. Employees must consider whether person might be able to personally identify a student or employee referred to, but not named in a post or communication taking into account all reasonably available information.
- Report as required by law, any information found on social media that falls under applicable mandatory reporting guidelines.
- Be alert to the possibility of phishing scams that arrive through a social media site and be cautious of security risks when using third-party applications that work with a social networking site.
- NO district logos, mascots, or other such graphic representations or images associated with the district may be used without prior permission from the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- Employees should not post or otherwise publish content that is deemed defamatory or obscene or which constitutes an incitement to imminent violence or a true threat, or which violates copyright or other intellectual property laws.
- Employees should understand and abide by the social media site.

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