

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CARSON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**REGULATION No. 265
PROGRAMS**

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCEPTABLE USE

Mission

The Carson City School District is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for its students and employees. Although social media has many benefits, events can happen online which can be inappropriate and lead to investigation and discipline.

Additionally, the District may not be able to protect or represent employees who incur legal action from a third party in response to the employee's behavior on a social networking site.

It is for this reason that the District has created a social media policy and regulations. It is the District's hope this regulation will encourage positive relationships between the employees, students, parents/guardians, constituents and stakeholders.

Employees and all persons who work with or have contact with students are expected to follow and abide by the District's Social Media Policy and Regulation, the purposes of which are:

1. To provide guidelines for social media communications between and among employees, students, and parents/guardians;
2. To prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information;
3. To prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by District users online; and
4. To comply with the [Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#); [Children's Internet Protection Act \(CIPA\)](#); the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\)](#); and [Information Security and Privacy Policy at the Nevada Department of Education](#).

Any media that includes depictions of or information relating to students must be reviewed prior to posting to ensure that the students' family agreed to media release. Non-complying media that includes student names or other identifying information is prohibited on District social media platforms.

Conditions and Rules for Use

All social media platforms created by District employees that intend to represent the District or any of its organizations must be approved by the District prior to publication. Any school, club, athletic, or District-related social media site requires constant monitoring. Any accounts, web sites, or social media pages existing prior to the adoption of the social media policy and this regulation will be subject to review.

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Official District social media platforms shall be used only for their stated purposes and in a manner consistent with the policy and this regulation. This includes, but is not limited to: school sites, clubs, athletic programs and events, teams, the School District Foundation and parent-teacher organizations.

Social media platforms, including blogs, social networks, and websites, governed under this policy include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, Google +, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Official District communications through social media platforms are expected to be transmitted through District provided devices, platforms, apps, and other means of broadcast.

Guidelines for Social Media

Always use common sense and professional judgment when utilizing social media platforms so that online behaviors reflect the same standards of professionalism, respect and integrity as any other communications. The following guidelines are to be followed when using social media:

1. **Be Responsible:** Employees are responsible for monitoring and maintaining their official presence online. The content posted by employees must not violate copyright or intellectual property laws and must conform to all applicable state and federal laws, as well as all board policies and District regulations.
2. **Get Authorization:** Before opening any District-related social media account, check with your supervisor or site administrator.
3. **Instant Messaging:** Due to the ephemeral, non-discoverable nature of instant messaging and IM services, they should not be used.
4. **Be Respectful:** Discussions online can encourage opposing ideas. Carefully consider all responses and how they would reflect on the poster and on the District. Refrain from expressing religious and political beliefs on District platforms.
5. **Be Accurate:** Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. Get the facts straight before posting them on online platforms.
6. **Use District Email:** When setting up a District or school related page, use your District email address. The District reserves the right to monitor users' online activities and to access, review, copy, or delete any communication or files and/or disclose them to others as it deems necessary and in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.
7. **Privacy of Students:** Never post identifying student information without the written, informed consent of the child's parent/guardian and principal. This includes names, videos and photographs on any school-based, personal or professional internet website. No last names, addresses, or phone numbers should appear on social media sites.
8. **Monitor Identity:** It is advisable to periodically check that your identity has not been compromised. If an employee's identity is being misrepresented, contact your supervisor or email the District office immediately. In turn, keep in mind that misrepresenting yourself by using someone else's identity is illegal.

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9. **Think Twice Before Posting Or Commenting:** Even with privacy controls, privacy does not actually exist on the Internet. If you would not share the information you are about to post in the classroom, do not share it online. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments and images can easily be copied and shared. Consider what could happen if an inappropriate post becomes widely known and how that could reflect on the person and the District. If you are unsure about posting something in particular, or responding to a comment, please ask your supervisor for input.

The District has jurisdiction to discipline employees who violate rules of appropriate conduct, which may include the use of social networking sites during or outside of work hours. The District reserves the right to monitor users' online activities and particularly with regard to District media and devices to access, review, copy, or delete any communication or files and/or disclose them to others as it deems necessary and in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

Monitoring Content

Any accounts, web sites, or social media pages existing prior to the adoption of the social media policy and this regulation will be subject to review.

The following are examples of potentially acceptable uses of social media using District platforms and devices:

- To support and enable Carson City School District community presence through social media platforms
- To communicate with students, families, and community members (events, calendar dates, communications, pictures)
- To recruit and maintain supporters/followers
- To develop a virtual School District community
- To create community amongst families and friends of the Carson City School District
- To foster parent activity in school events and activities
- To maintain and foster connections amongst families
- To share information
- To push school news
- To stay connected
- Friend-raiser (which may lead to fund-raising)

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The following items do not adhere to the District Social Media policy and regulations, and are not allowed:

- Profanity or obscenities
- Vulgar, racist or sexist slurs
- Nudity
- Hate Speech
- Libelous, slanderous, inflammatory or defamatory comments
- Name Calling
- Spam
- An advertisement for a commercial business
- Comments pertaining to enticements to violence
- Incorrect information
- Information that violates student privacy under FERPA or related state law
- Comments that are not respectful
- Comments that are not relevant to the topic
- A commenter who is misrepresenting himself/herself
- A single person who is dominating the conversation

Guidelines for Personal Social Media Accounts

Personal sites on social media platforms are not subject to District policy or this regulation; however, behaviors on personal sites could be subject to prohibitions contained in rules and regulations of the District.

Employees and staff should keep personal accounts private, and they should not “friend” any students, parents, or minors. There should be a clear distinction between personal social media sites and any District-related social media sites. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram all have privacy features to ensure that professional accounts are separated. When a student or minor requests to follow an employee’s personal social networking site, redirect them to the school-approved site. Accepting friend requests from graduated students over the age of 18 is acceptable, but employees are cautioned to use their best professional judgment.

To maintain a clear delineation between District-operated sites and the personal websites or social media pages of employees *who identify themselves as being affiliated with the District*, use of the following personal disclaimer is recommended for personal sites:

“The views expressed on my personal site are mine alone and do not reflect those of Carson City School District.”

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is an epidemic online and will not be tolerated in the Carson City School District. Posting inappropriate derogatory, disparaging, harassing, vulgar, abusive, threatening, racist, biased, or bullying comments toward or about any student or employee, on any website, email, or social networking site is prohibited and will subject an employee to discipline.

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See [Policy 543](#) and [Regulation 543](#) regarding Safe and Respectful Learning Environment; Free from Bullying or Cyber-Bullying.

Adopted: July 12, 2016