

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITY, WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff share the responsibility for communicating and interpreting the district mission, its policies, programs, goals and objectives to members of the community. Staff shall perform their services and functions to the best of their ability and communicate with members of the community, parents, students, and other staff in a sincere, courteous and considerate manner. Staff shall strive to develop and maintain cooperative school-community relations and to achieve the understanding and mutual respect that are essential to the success of any organization.

Confidential information about students or other staff shall be released only as permitted by statute and district policies and procedures.

Background

The Stanwood-Camano School District Board of Directors recognizes the role of technology in the modern workplace is continually expanding and now includes social media communication tools that facilitate interactive information sharing and collaboration. Many of these social media sites have large, loyal user bases and are increasingly important outreach and communication tools for teachers, administrators, and school districts.

Social media describes the online technologies, tools and practices that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives. Social media postings may include many different media formats, including written text, images, audio, and video. Examples of social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or a blog.

Social networking can improve interactivity between schools, staff, students, families and the community at large, and often reaches new and different populations from traditional media. Social media may be used for many purposes in an educational environment; examples include quick dissemination of time-sensitive information (e.g., emergency information, travel disruptions or changes, or District facility closures) and marketing/promotion of events or programs to the widest possible audience or a targeted audience, such as students in a specific class or club.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards and responsibilities for the use of social media by employees to represent the District, schools, school groups, teams or clubs, or individuals within schools or programs.

Coverage

The policy covers all District employees who are representing the District; a school; a school group, team or club; or themselves in their official District capacity through professional electronic social media sites. It does not apply to student-led sites on which a District employee is not participating; nor does it apply to peripheral groups such as PTAs or booster clubs. In the event a District employee oversees the site and/or posts to it in their professional capacity, the policy and procedure does apply.

Standards

District employees should use social media to represent the District, schools, school groups, teams or clubs, or individuals within schools or programs (collectively "professional electronic social media sites") like a classroom and professional workplace. The same standards of professional conduct that are expected in traditional District settings are expected on professional electronic social media sites.

All use of professional electronic social media sites by schools and staff should be consistent with applicable state, federal, and local laws, regulations, and policies. These include: information technology security policies; acceptable use policies; the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);

nondiscrimination policies; copyright and trademark laws; and applicable public records retention policies and schedules.

Development of Procedures

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures that recognize the importance of professional electronic social media sites as a communication tool for teachers, students, families, and other staff. The procedures shall be written to ensure that District and professional electronic social media sites are appropriately used, secured, and managed. The procedures shall be designed to protect students, employees, and the District, as well as ensure consistency across schools and the District in the use of professional electronic social media.

Cross Reference:

Board Policy 4020

Confidential Communications

Adoption Date: 08.04.20
Stanwood-Camano School District
Revised: