



Shelton School District
INSPIRE | CHALLENGE | EMPOWER

BOARD POLICY

Policy No. 2023
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INSTRUCTION

Electronic Communications/Social Media

1. Purpose

The Shelton School District recognizes that social media (as defined below) offers new and exciting opportunities to express creativity, share knowledge, build a sense of belonging and community, and engage in ongoing conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, colleagues and friends about common interests. At the same time, employee social media can impact the school community and may in some instances disrupt the Shelton School District's ("District") educational mission. The District encourages employees to consider the impact of social media on the school community. The District also recognizes that school employees have the constitutionally protected right to speak freely as private citizens on matters of public concern, unless the employee's speech causes or can reasonably be expected to cause a substantial disruption to school operations or undermine public trust. This policy is intended to provide guidance to school employees about social media use.

2. Definition

"Social Media" means a broadly accessible internet-based communications platform used to interact with other users and share content among a network. Examples of social media include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, blogs and Wikis.

3. Scope

A. Professional Social Media Use

The Shelton School District may approve professional social media sites for employees who wish to communicate with students or parents through those sites.

- i. Professional social media sites should address reasonable instructional, educational, or extra-curricular program matters. The same standards expected in schools and District professional settings are expected on professional social media sites.
- ii. Only those professional social media accounts approved by the District may use the District's name, the name of any of its schools or departments, its mascots or team names, or otherwise present words or images that purport to identify the social media account with the Shelton School District, its schools, departments, activities, or programs.

B. Personal Social Media Use

- i. Employees may not use social media for personal use during work time.

- ii. The decision of whether or not to use social media for personal use, outside of work hours, is left to the discretion of the individual District employee. The District recognizes that employees have a constitutionally protected right to speak as private citizens on matters of public concern.
- iii. District employees shall not communicate or otherwise disseminate any confidential information they have access to as a result of their employment with the District. Employees will not disclose personally identifiable information from student records except to the extent permitted under Policy and Procedure 3231 and 3231P and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- iv. The District may take appropriate action when it becomes aware of employee conduct or communication on social media that causes or that the District reasonably believes will cause a substantial disruption to the District's educational operations, undermine public trust, or disclosed confidential information.
- v. The District will not take adverse action simply because it disagrees with an employee's communication on social media, in his or her capacity as a private citizen, and on a matter of public concern.

The Acceptable Use Policy continues to govern employees, students and other users' access to and use of Shelton School District and network information resources.

Approved: January 9, 2018

Cross References:	Board Policy	2020	Course Design, Selection, and Adoption of Instructional Materials
		2022	Electronic Resources
		2025	Copyright Compliance
		3207	Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
		3231	Student Records
		4040	Public Access to District Records
		5200	Staff Conduct
		5281	Disciplinary Action and Discharge

Legal Reference:	18 USC §§ 2510-2522	Electronic Communication Privacy Act Pub. L No. 110-385 Protecting Children in the 21 st Century Act
	20 U.S.C. § 1232g	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Management Resources:

Policy News, February 2012

Policy News, June 2008

Policy News, June 2001

Policy News, August 1998

Electronic Resources

Congress Requires Internet Blocking at School

Permission required to review e-mail