

## 2350 District Social Media Policy

Bergenfield Public Schools recognizes the importance of open exchange and learning between the District and members of the school community, including staff, students, parents, community members, community partners and the media.

For purposes of this policy, social media refers to online applications that allow users to connect to each other and to create, share, and collaborate content. Social media can include, but is not limited to: blogs; wikis; social networking websites (SNS), such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, RSS, YouTube, LinkedIn, Flickr, Google+, podcasts, video sharing, instant messaging, email, and all online collaboration, information, and publishing systems. Some quiz and skill practice websites include social media applications as well.

These tools enable the District to share what is happening in our schools with the world, but more importantly they let us hear directly and immediately from students, staff, parents, alumni, and friends about what is important to them.

In the best interests of our District and our community, District staff and students who administer or use official social media sites on behalf of the District must adhere to all existing policies, including, but not limited to:

Policy 2360 - Use of Technology

Policy 2361 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources

Policies 0282, 1282, 3282 and 4282 - Use of Social Networking Sites

Policy 3211- Code of Ethics

Policies 3283 and 4283 – Electronic Communications

Policy and Regulation 5600 – Pupil Discipline

Policy 5512.01- Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

Policy 5512.02- Cyber-Bullying

Any violations of the provisions outlined herein are subject to appropriate disciplinary action. All infractions by staff members shall be immediately reported to the building principal. A review board, which may consist of the building principal, a board member and the superintendent or his/her designee, shall be convened to determine appropriate disciplinary corrective action. Infractions by students shall be immediately reported to the building principal, and disciplinary corrective action shall be taken in accordance with Board Policy 5600, Pupil Discipline.

## **Bergenfield Public Schools Social Media Guidelines**



The audience for the District's social media channels include our staff, students, parents, community members and partners, and the media. The following District goals in using social media are to complement, but not replace traditional outreach efforts such as printed publications:

- 1) Disseminate important information about District news, events, and accomplishments.
- 2) Raise awareness of district activities and efforts.
- 3) Allow for enhanced communication between the community and the District.

The Board recognizes the importance of teachers, students and parents engaging in these digital environments as part of 21st century learning and communicating. The District has, therefore, developed the following guidelines to provide direction for employees, students, and the school community when participating in online social media activities.

### General Guidelines

- The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, in general, protects the rights of individuals to participate in social media. However, online posts shall not disrupt school operations and must comply with federal, state and local laws and policies.
- The District will not condone unauthorized commercial solicitations; inappropriate language, bullying, intimidation, harassment; content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic, or that contains nudity or graphic or gratuitous violence; or anything unlawful, misleading, malicious, or discriminatory. The District reserves the right to block members or remove their comments on our social media pages when they violate this clause.
- The District welcomes a healthy two-way dialogue with the community and, therefore, encourages community members to contribute to our social media pages. However, community-contributed responses are the opinion of the specific author only, and do not represent the views of the Board or the District.

### Faculty and Staff Guidelines

- ? All staff are expected to serve as positive ambassadors for the District and appropriate role models for students. It is vital that staff members maintain professionalism in their interactions with students and the community.
- ? All employees must comply with District Policies 1282, 3282 or 4282, Use of Social Networking Sites, as applicable, which set forth the appropriate use of



- these tools. Staff members whose social media activity is inconsistent with these policies shall be disciplined appropriately.
- ? Staff members should exercise care when utilizing, posting or publishing images, photographs or comments on social media and shall not represent their personal views as those of the Board or the District.
  - ? Social media programs, when used appropriately, can be powerful teaching tools that add value to classroom instruction. Teachers are encouraged to use these tools to address classroom educational goals. Staff must sign the 'District Social Media Participation' form once they create a channel for their class.
  - ? If teachers communicate with students or parents through social media, such communication shall be through their District-approved accounts and relate to school-related activities only.
  - ? Remember that school sponsored social media sites are an extension of your classroom and workplace. What is inappropriate in your classroom or workplace will be deemed inappropriate online.
  - ? Respect the intellectual property of others, including laws regarding copyright.

### Student Guidelines

- ? Be aware of what you post online. Social media channels are public and what you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see, such as college officials and potential employers.
- ? Be respectful. While it is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, make certain the criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate online.
- ? Be sure not to plagiarize and be sure to give credit where warranted.
- ? Do not promote illegal activities and/or violence.
- ? Protect yourself. Only accept "friend" requests from people you know.
- ? Do not share confidential information, such as your social security number or your exact address, through open channels.
- ? If you are being cyberbullied or know someone who is being cyberbullied, report the behavior to your building principal, as outlined in District Policy 5512: Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying and District Policy 5512.02: Cyber-Bullying.
- ? Comply with the rules established by the Code of Ethics and Use of Technology Agreement as outlined in the student handbook.



## Parent Guidelines

- ? Parents may expect communication from teachers regarding their child's involvement in school projects via social media applications.
- ? Parents are highly encouraged to be aware of their children's electronic communications.
- ? Parent participation is encouraged to help ensure that student involvement in social media is appropriate and that privacy concerns are addressed.

Adopted: February 3, 2015

