

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)

POLICY

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

SECTION 3.8

The Board of Education welcomes the responsible use of social media technologies and other forms of electronic communication to support learning and for School District business and communication purposes. This Policy and Regulations have been developed to provide all employees, as well as Trustees, with guidelines to understand the impact of social media and electronic communication and their appropriate uses in order to ensure professional communication standards and to mitigate both the School District's employees', as well as Trustees', exposure to risk.

The Board of Education recognizes the open nature of social media which is often used for both personal and professional purposes. However, professionalism remains of utmost importance. It may not always be clear when one is speaking on behalf of the District, sharing facts, or sharing personal/professional opinions. It is important to remember that we are subject to the same laws, policies, and expectations when interacting online as we would in-person.

This Policy is designed to clarify all employees', as well as Trustees', responsibilities when posting material online and exchanging electronic communications with students, parents and co-workers. This Policy and its Regulations apply to social media use and other electronic communications by all employees, as well as Trustees, whether during the work day or at other times, on the District network or from outside the District network and on District devices or personal devices. All employees, as well as Trustees, should be aware that there is not an expectation of privacy in social media use and electronic communications. Social media and electronic communications are subject to review by the Board of Education as reasonably required, including to investigate complaints of inappropriate use. Breach of this Policy and Regulations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Related By-laws, Policies, Contracts and Regulations:

[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

Section 7.1 – Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technology and Technology Services

[Ministry of Education, Teacher Regulation Branch](#)

[Copyright Laws in Canada](#)

[Letter from the Superintendent on Social Media](#)

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)

REGULATIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

SECTION 3.8R

Definitions

“**Social media**” refers to all internet-based applications and technologies which provide for the creation, exchange or sharing of information, opinions, commentary, personal messages and other user generated content, including but not limited to the use of social networks, digital citizenship, digital footprint, blogging, tweeting, wikis, podcasts, video casts, video, audio, media, social bookmarking, postings through apps and including, but not limited to current top examples: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, YouTube, Google+ and Google Hangout.

“**Electronic communications**” refers to any written, audio, video, visual or digital communications occurring between employees or any one or more individuals through electronic means, including email, texting and other messaging services whether or not such communications are internet based.

1. No Expectation of Privacy

- 1.1 Employees should understand that there is no expectation of privacy in the use of social media or electronic communications, and that online and other electronically recorded communications may potentially be read or accessed by third parties or transferred to others without the knowledge or consent of the creator.

2. Responsibility of Employees

- 2.1 Employees are responsible for their electronic communications and for any content that they publish online, whether it is under the employee’s own name, an alias or is anonymous, and must ensure it complies with the applicable laws, School District Policy and professional standards of conduct, including those of the Ministry of Education, Teacher Regulation Branch. This expectation of conduct includes a responsibility to ensure that contributions to any site that is created by an employee are monitored, administered and moderated to ensure compliance with this Policy and Regulations.
- 2.2 Inappropriate communications through the use of social media or other electronic devices are subject to the same policies and principles as other forms of work related misconduct. Employees have a responsibility to make appropriate reports to the School District about breaches of this Policy and/or Regulations, or the misuse of these technologies, including whether such communications negatively impact students, the workplace or the reputation of the School District.

3. General Code of Conduct

- 3.1 Anything posted online by employees or communicated electronically to third parties may be perceived to be representative of the School District. Therefore, employees are expected to model an appropriate online presence and to exercise good judgment to ensure that postings and communications do not reflect negatively on the employee's professional reputation or that of the School District. It is expected that employees take reasonable steps to monitor and exercise appropriate controls over their online presence, including by requesting that friends and third parties not post photos, videos or other online content depicting or pertaining to the employee that is not appropriate to the employee's role in the School District.
- 3.2 Social media is an extension of the workplace. What is inappropriate in the workplace is also inappropriate online and when expressed in other electronic communications, including criticizing students, employees, parents or the School District. Electronic communications and online posts involving students, co-workers, or parents should at all times be professional in nature. Electronic communications and online activities must not interfere with the performance of an employee's employment responsibilities.
- 3.3 Employees must ensure that any information they post online or distribute through other electronic communications does not breach the privacy or confidentiality of another person. The use of disclosure of "personal information" of co-workers, students or parents in connection with social networking websites and services and through other electronic communications may be subject to the *British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA), and other privacy laws. It may also be subject to other legal obligations of confidentiality.
- 3.4 Employees must in their use of social media respect and model copyright and fair use guidelines. Employees must not plagiarize, and must properly acknowledge the authorship of materials posted by them. When using a hyperlink to attribute authorship, employees must be sure that the content of the linked site is appropriate and adheres to School District policies.
- 3.5 When posting online content employees should not speak on behalf of the School District or use School District logos on private social media sites unless specifically authorized to do so.
- 3.6 Employees should pay particular attention to the privacy settings for their personal social media page. Some content that is appropriate for personal friends is not appropriate for circulation to work colleagues, parents and students. However, employees should not look to the privacy settings on their personal social media page as creating anonymity or as a guarantee postings will not be shared more broadly.