

Policy 1114: District-Sponsored Social Media

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 07/01/2011 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/01/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/01/2024

CSBA NOTE: The following optional policy is for use by districts that have created an official district (i.e., district-sponsored) social media account. "Social media" is defined in the accompanying administrative regulation as an online platform for collaboration, interaction, or active participation, or that allows users to post content, including social networking sites such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X/Twitter, SnapChat, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.

District strategies for effective use of online social media may be incorporated into the district's comprehensive communications plan; see BP 1100 - Communication With The Public.

The Governing Board recognizes the value of social media to share district information with families and the community and promote community involvement and collaboration in district decisions. The purpose of any official district social media account shall be to further the district's vision and mission, to support student learning and staff professional development, and to enhance communication and engagement with students, families, staff, and community members. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the content posted by the district on an official district social media account is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

CSBA NOTE: To minimize liability to the district, it is important to clearly define the official social media accounts which the district sponsors and to specify the standards, guidelines, and protocols for their use. Board policies and administrative regulations do not apply to personal social media accounts that may be created by students, staff members, or other individuals which may sometimes include discussion of district-related issues but are not sponsored by the district.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop content guidelines and protocols for official district social media accounts to ensure public access, appropriate and responsible use, and compliance with law, board policy, and administrative regulation.

Guidelines for Content

CSBA NOTE: Social media platforms typically allow users to post or reply to content posted on users' accounts, which is or can be made viewable to other users and even the public. This may create a "limited public forum," which grants individuals certain freedom of speech rights and limits the district's ability to remove comments or posts. Any removal of content by the district should be based on viewpoint-neutral considerations to protect against possible legal challenges. This may include, but is not limited to, removing content that constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation, or that is unrelated to the purpose of the account. Additionally, in order to help maintain the district's ability to remove content, users should be informed of the purpose of the account(s) and the limited nature of the discussion. District staff should regularly monitor all such accounts so that materials are removed as permitted by law. See the accompanying administrative regulation for language regarding removal of posts and monitoring of accounts. It is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel to ensure that any provisions related to removal of posts or discipline of students or staff are consistent with law.

Official district social media accounts shall be used only for their stated purposes and in a manner consistent with this policy and administrative regulation. This policy is not intended to create an open public forum or otherwise guarantee an individual's right to free speech on any of the official district social media accounts even if one or more features on the account that permit interaction with and between members of the public are enabled.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the limited purpose of official district social media accounts is clearly communicated to users. Each account shall contain a statement specifying the purposes of the account, that the account shall only be used for such purposes, and any other user expectations or conditions as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation.

Official district social media accounts may not contain content that is obscene, libelous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation.

CSBA NOTE: Staff and students who post prohibited content on official district social media accounts are subject to discipline in accordance with board policies and administrative regulations. Pursuant to Education Code 48900(r), a student may be subject to suspension or expulsion if the student engages in an act of bullying by means of an

electronic act as defined in Education Code 32261; see AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process. Pursuant to Education Code 32261, an "electronic act" includes, but is not limited to, posts on a social networking site.

When staff and students misuse the district's technological resources, they also may be subject to cancellation of user privileges in accordance with the district's Acceptable Use Agreement; see BP/E 4040 - Employee Use of Technology and BP/E 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology.

Staff or students who post prohibited content or otherwise engage with an official district social media account in a manner that violates board policies and administrative regulations shall be subject to discipline in accordance with such applicable policies and regulations.

Users of official district social media accounts, and anyone who posts, replies, or otherwise leaves a digital footprint on an official district social media account, should be aware of the public nature and accessibility of social media and that such information posted or left on an official district social media account may be considered a public record subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Privacy

To the extent practicable, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the privacy rights of students, parents/guardians, staff, Board members, and other individuals are protected on official district social media accounts.

As it pertains to the posting of student photographs and the privacy of telephone numbers, home addresses, and email addresses, official district social media accounts shall operate in accordance with district practices and applicable policies.

Social media and other online platforms shall not be used by district employees to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or district operations.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References

Ed. Code 32260-32262

Ed. Code 35182.5

Ed. Code 48900

Ed. Code 48907

Ed. Code 48950

Ed. Code 49061

Ed. Code 49073

Ed. Code 60048

Gov. Code 3307.5

Gov. Code 54952.2

Gov. Code 7920.000-7930.215

Description

[Interagency School Safety Demonstration Act of 1985](#)

[Contracts for advertising](#)

[Grounds for suspension or expulsion](#)

[Exercise of free expression; time, place, and manner rules and regulations](#)

[Speech and other communication](#)

[Definitions; directory information](#)

[Release of directory information](#)

[Commercial brand names, contracts or logos](#)

[Publishing identity of public safety officers](#)

[Brown Act; definition of meeting](#)

[California Public Records Act](#)

Federal References

17 USC 101-1101

20 USC 1232g

29 USC 157

29 USC 794

34 CFR 99.1-99.67

Description

Federal copyright law

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974

Employee rights to engage in concerted, protected activity

Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Section 504

Family Educational Rights and Privacy

Management Resources References

Court Decision	Lindke v. Freed (2024) 601 U.S. 187
Court Decision	Aaris v. Las Virgenes Unified School District (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1112
Court Decision	Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District, et.al. v. Pico (1982) 457 U.S. 853
Court Decision	Page v. Lexington County School District (2008, 4th Cir.) 531 F.3d 275
Court Decision	Perry Education Association v. Perry Local Educators' Association (1983) 460 U.S. 37
Court Decision	Downs v. Los Angeles Unified School District (9th Cir. 2000) 228 F.3d 1003
Facebook Publication	Facebook for Educators Guide, 2013
National Labor Relations Board Decision 18-CA-1908	Sears Holdings, December 4, 2009
Website	Meta in Education
Website	CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services
Website	Facebook, privacy resources
Website	California School Public Relations Association
Website	CSBA

Cross References

	Description
0000	Vision
0410	Nondiscrimination In District Programs And Activities
0440	District Technology Plan
0440	District Technology Plan
0510	School Accountability Report Card
0510	School Accountability Report Card
1100	Communication With The Public
1112	Media Relations
1113	District And School Websites
1113	District And School Websites
1113-E(1)	District And School Websites
1160	Political Processes
1230	School-Connected Organizations
1230	School-Connected Organizations
1260	Educational Foundation
1312.3	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3-E(1)	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1312.3-E(2)	Uniform Complaint Procedures
1325	Advertising And Promotion
3515.7	Firearms On School Grounds
3516	Emergencies And Disaster Preparedness Plan
3516	Emergencies And Disaster Preparedness Plan
4030	Nondiscrimination In Employment

Cross References**Description**

4030	Nondiscrimination In Employment
4040	Employee Use Of Technology
4040-E(1)	Employee Use Of Technology
4118	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4118	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4119.21	Professional Standards
4119.21-E(1)	Professional Standards
4119.23	Unauthorized Release Of Confidential/Privileged Information
4131	Staff Development
4132	Publication Or Creation Of Materials
4218	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4218	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4219.21	Professional Standards
4219.21-E(1)	Professional Standards
4219.23	Unauthorized Release Of Confidential/Privileged Information
4231	Staff Development
4232	Publication Or Creation Of Materials
4319.21	Professional Standards
4319.21-E(1)	Professional Standards
4319.23	Unauthorized Release Of Confidential/Privileged Information
4331	Staff Development
4332	Publication Or Creation Of Materials
5022	Student And Family Privacy Rights
5022	Student And Family Privacy Rights
5125	Student Records
5125	Student Records
5125.1	Release Of Directory Information
5125.1	Release Of Directory Information
5125.1-E(1)	Release Of Directory Information
5131	Conduct
5142.2	Safe Routes To School Program
5142.2	Safe Routes To School Program
5144	Discipline
5144	Discipline
5144.1	Suspension And Expulsion/Due Process
5144.1	Suspension And Expulsion/Due Process
5145.2	Freedom Of Speech/Expression
5145.2	Freedom Of Speech/Expression
5145.3	Nondiscrimination/Harassment
5145.3	Nondiscrimination/Harassment

Cross References

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