



1<sup>st</sup> April 2014

## **Social Media Policy/Guidelines**

### **Overview:**

The Ambassador School recognizes the rights of students, faculty, staff, and employees who want to participate in online social networking. Our guidelines are designed to create an atmosphere of good will, honesty, and individual accountability. Ambassador students, faculty, and staff should always keep in mind that information produced, shared, and retrieved by them is a reflection on the school community and is subject to the School's policies. When accessing, creating, or contributing to any blogs, wikis, podcasts, or other social media for classroom or, in most cases, for personal use, we expect you to keep these guidelines in mind. Failure to meet or follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

### **Students: Social Media Guidelines:**

In accordance with The Honor Code, we expect Ambassador Students to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking. Since social media reaches audiences far beyond the community, students must use social sites responsibly and be accountable for their actions. If a student sees anything of concern on a fellow Ambassador student's social networking page or account, they should immediately contact the Principal, the Manager of Information Technology, or another adult within the Ambassador community.

1. In the online environment, students must follow The Ambassador Honor Code and Code of Conduct and conduct themselves online as in School.
2. Think before you post. Ambassador asks students to use discretion when posting to the internet.
3. Ambassador reserves the right to request school-related images or content posted without permission to be removed from the internet.
4. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
5. Social media venues are public and information can be shared beyond your control. Be conscious of what you post online as you will leave a long-lasting impression on many different audiences.
6. Do not post or link anything (photos, videos, web pages, audio files, forums, groups, fan pages, etc.) to your social networking sites that you wouldn't want friends, peers, parents, teachers,

school admissions officers, or future employers to access. What you present on social networking forums represents you forever.

7. When responding to others, remember to be respectful and avoid comments that may be hurtful. Do not use profane, obscene, or threatening language.
8. Only accept invitations to share information from people you know. Utilize privacy settings to control access to your network, web pages, profile, posts, blogs, wikis, podcasts, digital media, forums, groups, fan pages, etc.
9. Online stalkers and identity thieves are a real threat. Never share personal information, including, but not limited to, Social Security numbers, phone numbers, addresses, birthdates, and pictures with parties you don't know or on unsecure sites.
10. Users should keep their passwords secure and never share passwords with others. If someone tampers with your blog, email, or social networking account without you knowing about it, you could be held accountable.
11. Cyberbullying is considered an act of harassment.
12. Use of Ambassador Logos or images on your personal social networking sites is prohibited. If you wish to promote a specific Ambassador Activity or event, you may do so only by means of a link to the official Ambassador School Facebook account, Twitter account, or YouTube channel.

### **Parent Social Media Guidelines:**

Classroom blogs and other social media are powerful tools that open up communication between students, parents, and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a huge impact on learning. Ambassador School encourages parents to view and participate by adding comments to classroom projects when appropriate.

Parents are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Parents should expect communication from teachers prior to their child's involvement in any project using online social media applications, i.e., Facebook, blogs, wikis, podcast, etc.
2. Parents will need to sign a release form for students when teachers set up social media activities for classroom use.
3. Parents will not attempt to destroy or harm any information online.
4. Parents will not use classroom social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
5. Parents are highly encouraged to read and/or participate in social media.
6. Parents should not distribute any information that might be deemed personal about Ambassador School.
7. Parents should not upload or include any information that does not also meet the Student Guidelines.

## **Social Media Guidelines for Faculty & Staff:**

### **Personal Responsibility:**

Ambassador School employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.

1. Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
2. When posting to your blog or any social media site be sure you say that the information is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of Ambassador School.
3. Remember that blogs, wikis and podcasts are an extension of your classroom. What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.
4. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as an X School District employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at X School District.
5. When contributing online do not post confidential student information.

### **Disclaimers:**

Ambassador School employees must include disclaimers within their personal blogs that the views are their own and do not reflect on their employer. For example, "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Ambassador School District's positions, strategies, opinions, or policies."

This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt Ambassador School employees from a special responsibility when blogging.

Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer, but teachers are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.

### **Profiles and Identity:**

Remember your association and responsibility with the Ambassador School in online social environments. If you identify yourself as an Ambassador School employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents, and students. How you represent yourself online should be comparable to how you represent yourself in person.

No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on Facebook, blogs or wikis.

Be cautious how you setup your profile, bio, avatar, etc.

When uploading digital pictures or avatars that represent yourself make sure you select a school appropriate image. Adhere to Employee handout book guidelines as well as your AUP. Also remember not to utilize protected images. Images should be available under Creative Commons or your own.

### **Personal Use of Social Media such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter:**

Ambassador School employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.

1. Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional Standards.
2. By Posting your comments having online conversations etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what you 'say' online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
3. Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
4. Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
5. Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
6. Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and by that token an extension of your professional life and your classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the wall - is it really correct to put it online?
7. Microblogging (Twitter etc.) Comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings as witnessed by the high profile cases like sports stars being disciplined for tweets expressing personal views. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and again refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.

### **Social Bookmarking:**

1. Be aware that others can view the sites that you bookmark.
2. Be aware of words used to tag or describe the bookmark.
3. Be aware of URL shortening services. Verify the landing site to which they point before submitting a link as a bookmark. It would be best to utilize the original URL if not constrained by the number of characters as in microblogs -- i.e. Twitter
4. Attempt to link directly to a page or resource if possible as you do not control what appears on landing pages in the future.