

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOLS FOR DISTRICT EMPLOYEE  
USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING AT ALL DISTRICT SITES**

**A. Introduction:**

The following guidelines are provided to help Collier County School District employees appropriately use social media and social networking as effectively as possible. These guidelines are also being provided to help protect District employee reputations, follow state rules and ethical standards, and drawn upon respected social media sources from around the country.

The purpose of these guidelines are also to remind District employees of the importance of

- (a) maintaining professional relationship with students and with one another at all times; and
- (b) not engaging in social media and social networking for personal use on work time.

**B. Use of Social Media and Social Networking:**

- Employees participating in social media usage and social networking sites for District related purposes on work time must receive written approval from their respective supervisors by completing the District's on-line form that may be found at [www.collierschools.com/comm/sm/index.asp](http://www.collierschools.com/comm/sm/index.asp).
- Employees may not use social media and social networking for personal use during work time.
- Employees must identify themselves appropriately, and their position with the District, if necessary, when undertaking such usage.
- Posting confidential and/or proprietary information about the District, its data, students, or its employees is forbidden. Inappropriate posting of this sort can lead to disciplinary action. Employees are expected to behave ethically, honor the Code of Ethics, and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession of Florida, which is incorporated into District policy, as well as all state and federal laws pertaining to proprietary and confidential information. Employees may review the Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Conduct by visiting the district website at <http://www.collierschools.com/HR/ethics-english.pdf>. Related policies can be viewed by visiting <http://www.neola.com/collier-fl/> and clicking either Policy 1210, Policy 3210, or Policy 4210.
- Employees must be professional and respectful in all communications with all persons, whether for District use, and/or personal use where such use could impact in any way upon the District, its reputation, and the employee's reputation as a District employee.
- Employees should be mindful of the fact that social media sites and blogs are not private. Information may remain posted for years. Moreover, such postings could become subject to public records requests.

- Posting of inappropriate messages, photographs, and/or documents is not permissible. Employees should understand that doing so can have professional and/or personal ramifications that can expose Employees to liability; whether posted on District time or on personal time.
- Employees must refrain from creating personal web pages or use social media/networking sites (such as Facebook or My Space) to communicate with students currently enrolled in the District. This specifically includes “friending” students, permitting or inviting social interaction with students, or allowing students access to Employees’ personal pages or sites to communicate as a friend.
- If there is an intention to communicate with a student or students through social media or social networking, it must be done for educational purposes, approved by District, supervisory personnel, and parents must be notified and consent given to do so; especially if such information is intended to reach students after school hours.
- Instructional Personnel, who wish to establish a social media presence for District educational purposes, are encouraged to use District vetted social media applications. Such instructional personnel should complete the on-line form at the link referenced above.
- Where Employees are related to currently enrolled students, unless they are the parent of the student to be friended, they must receive permission in writing from the student’s parent(s) authorization the friending.
- A Principal of a school, or his/her designee, who wishes to create a school social media site or account needs to review the Guidelines for Official School Pages/Accounts and complete the district’s online form at [www.collierschools.com/comm/sm/index.asp](http://www.collierschools.com/comm/sm/index.asp). The Communications Department will review the proposed official school site/account prior to it going live.
- When acting as agents of the District, employees are cautioned not to provide either their personal email address or cell phone number to currently enrolled students or to their parents. All communications with parents concerning students must be from the employee’s District email address.
- Employees should be cautious before posting images of students or colleagues on any website, whether District or personal, without prior authorization from parents of such students, colleagues, and District supervisory personnel.
- Employees must refrain from comments, whether on District sites or personal sites, about students, colleagues, parents, or any other person that could lead to personal or professional harm to the employee or to the person about whom one is commenting.
- District employees who are supervisors are discouraged from friending employees who report directly to them or who they evaluate and/or assess.

- Remember that as a District employee, you are an ambassador for the District. Thus, you must be mindful in your usage of social media and social networking that your actions may have personal, professional, ethical, and legal consequence not only for you, but also for your colleagues, the District, and the community at-large.

C. **Enforcement:**

- Employees who violate the provisions of these guidelines risk being subject to appropriate disciplinary action.