

McGregor Independent School District Social Media Guidelines for Employees

INTERNAL POLICY

PURPOSE

This document defines the social networking and social media policy for McGregor ISD. To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, district and campus departments may consider using social media tools to further the goals of the district, where appropriate.

The district has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on its behalf on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media.

Social media is defined as any form of online publication that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, websites, Internet forums, and wikis.

ACCEPTABLE USE

Personal Use

All district employees may have personal social networking, Web 2.0 and social media sites. These sites should remain personal in nature and be used to share personal opinions or non-work related information. Following this principle helps ensure a distinction between sharing personal and district views.

District employees must never use their district email account or password in conjunction with a personal social networking, Web 2.0 or social media site.

The following guidance is for district employees who decide to have a personal social media, Web 2.0 or social networking site or who decide to comment on posts about official district business:

- State your name and, if relevant, role, when discussing district business.
- Use a disclaimer such as: “The postings on this site are my own and I don’t reflect or represent the opinions of the district for which I work.”
- Even with strict privacy settings, when posting online comments that are related to the district, staff should act as if all posts are in the public domain.
- Do not access personal social media accounts from school computers or on a campus network.
- The district prohibits staff members from “friending” and interacting with current students from their personal social media accounts. This is not an appropriate forum to have communication between staff and students.

Professional Use

All official district-related communication through social media, Web 2.0 and social networking outlets should remain professional in nature and should always be conducted in accordance with the district’s communication policy, practices and expectations. Employees must not use official district social media, Web 2.0 or social networking sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities.

District employees must be mindful that inappropriate usage of official district social media, Web 2.0 and social networking sites can be grounds for disciplinary action. If social media, Web 2.0 and social networking sites are used for official district business, the entire district site, regardless of any personal views is subject to best practices guidelines and standards.

Only individuals authorized by the district may publish content to a district website or social media profile.

APPROVAL AND REGISTRATION

Employees wanting to create a professional social media site must first seek approval from their campus principal and the district technology director. The district-approved social media platforms employees may use are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. After the employee site is published, it must be immediately registered with the district technology director for archiving purposes. The site must be administered and managed by the employee and/or designee.

OVERSIGHT AND ENFORCEMENT

Employees representing the district through social media outlets or participating in social media activities on district websites must maintain a high level of ethical conduct and professional decorum. Failure to do so is grounds for revoking the privilege to participate in district social media sites, blogs or other social media platforms and activities.

Information must be presented following professional standards for good grammar, spelling, brevity, clarity and accuracy, and avoid jargon, obscure terminology or acronyms.

District employees may not publish information on district social media sites that includes:

- Confidential information about students or staff
- Copyright violations
- Profanity, racist, sexist, or derogatory content or comments
- Partisan political views
- Commercial endorsements or Spam

RECORDS RETENTION

Social media sites contain communications sent to or received by the district and its employees, and such communications are therefore public records subject to Texas Gov't Code § 552.002. These retention requirements apply regardless of the form of the record (ex: digital text, photos, audio, and video). The department maintaining a site shall preserve records pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. Furthermore, retention of social media records shall fulfill the following requirements:

- Social media records are captured in a continuous, automated fashion throughout the day to minimize a potential loss of data due to deletion and/or changes on the social networking site.
- Social media records are maintained in an authentic formation (ex: ideally the native-technical format provided by the social network, such as XML or JSON) along with complete metadata.
- Social media records are archived in a system that preserves the context of communications, including conversation threads and rich media, to ensure completeness and availability of relevant information when records are accessed.
- Social media records are indexed based on specific criteria such as date, content type, and keywords to ensure that records can be quickly located and produced in an appropriate format (ex: pdf).

- Each employee who administers one or more social networking site on behalf of the district has self-service, read-only access to search and produce relevant social media records to fulfill public information and legal discovery requests as needed.

The district utilizes an automated archiving solution provided by ArchiveSocial to comply with applicable public records law and fulfill the above record retention requirements. The district archive is available at <http://archivesocial.com>

EXTERNAL POLICY

The following guidelines must be displayed to users on all social media sites or made available by hyperlink.

MODERATION OF THIRD PARTY CONTENT

This district social media site serves as a limited public forum and all content published is subject to monitoring. User-generated posts will be rejected or removed if possible when the content of a post:

- Is off-subject or out of context
- Contains obscenity or material that appeals to the prurient interest
- Contains personal identifying information or sensitive personal information
- Contains offensive terms that target protected classes
- Is threatening, harassing or discriminatory
- Incites or promotes violence or illegal activities
- Contains information that reasonably could compromise individual or public safety
- Advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual
- Promotes or endorses political campaigns or candidates

PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

District social media sites are subject to applicable public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format related to district business, including communication posted by the district and communication received from citizens, is a public record. The department maintaining the site is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for social media content.