

**SUBJECT: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Board of Education of the Watervliet City School District recognizes the importance of District employees, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in digital environments. To this aim, the Watervliet City School District has developed the following policy to provide direction for District employees, students and parents when participating in online school-based social media activities.

The Watervliet City School District "Use of Social Media" policy encourages employees and students to participate in the use of social computing for school-based learning and strives to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability, keeping in mind that information produced by the Watervliet City School District teachers and students is a reflection of the entire District and is subject to the District's Acceptable Use Policy. By accessing, creating or contributing to any Web 2.0 (blogs, wikis, podcasts, sites using digital or video imaging or other social media) for classroom or District use, all employees and students are required to abide by these guidelines.

Therefore, the Board of Education will direct the Superintendent of Schools to establish appropriate guidelines that will be used as a model for all employees and students, parents and community members in using the social media sites that may affect our students and the School District. This policy will be revisited every year in approving the School District's *Code of Conduct on School Property* in order to ensure the compliance of this policy or changes that may be necessitated by advancements in digital media.

**Definitions**

"Social media" from this point forward refers to Internet-based media that includes, but is not limited to blogs, wikis, podcasts, sites using digital images and video. It refers to a wide variety of Internet-based sites that include, but is not limited, to Facebook, Twitter, Google shared apps, You Tube, and other media that involves the interaction and sharing of social information and employee/student work.

**Personal Responsibility**

- a) Watervliet City School District employees and students are legally and personally responsible for the content they publish online.
- b) Online behavior should reflect standards of honesty, respect, and consideration.
- c) When posting to a blog relating to the District or education, it is to be stated at the beginning of the posting that the information is representative of the author's views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of the Watervliet City School District.
- d) Social media, when used in a constructive manner can be an extension of the classroom. What is inappropriate in a classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.

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## Community Relations

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- e) Employees should ensure that content associated with them is consistent with the goals of the Watervliet City School District.
- f) All School Board members, educators, teachers and staff members are reminded that they are expected to abide by all applicable state and federal laws, professional and ethical codes of conduct, Board of Education Policies, administrative regulations, the District Code of Conduct, applicable employment handbooks/policies, and collective bargaining agreements. This statement does not replace or supersede any existing policy or procedure.
- g) Confidential student and employee information may not be posted online on any social media tool.
- h) Social media will not be used to harass or bully others in any way.
- i) Individuals' privacy shall be respected in the use of social media.

Copyright and Fair Use for Employees and Students

- a) Respect copyright and fair use guidelines.
- b) Hyperlinking to outside sources is recommended. When hyperlinking be sure that the content is appropriate.
- c) Be sure to always give credit where it is due (proper attribution) and not to plagiarize.

Profiles and Identity

- a) Be cautious on how you set up a profile, bio, avatar, etc. No addresses or phone numbers of students, employees, parents or community members should appear on school-based social media, including blogs or wikis.
- b) In accordance with the District's opt out of directory and media policy- {Check with the Building Principals for the list of parents who have chosen to have their child opt out} pictures, videos, audio or digital reproductions of students, employees, parents or community members can be displayed on any school-based social media site without the consent of the individual student (if 18 or older, i.e., "eligible student") or the parents or guardians of students (less than 18 years of age) unless the eligible student or parent/guardian chose to sign and return the District opt out policy.

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**SUBJECT: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (Cont'd.)****Requests for Social Media Sites**

The Watervliet City School District understands that technology is constantly changing and that many sites have pedagogical significance for teacher and student use.

- a) If you would like to request that an online site (including one of your own creation) be accessible to use for teaching and learning, please fill out the Social Media Request Form and submit it to District Director of Curriculum and Instruction for review.
- b) Requests will be reviewed and the District social media guidelines will be updated periodically.
- c) A description should be provided of the intended use of the site and what tools on the site match your needed criteria.
- d) A link to the site's privacy policy should be included if possible.

**Social Media Policy for Students**

- a) A student will not post identifying information such as address, age, email address, or telephone number.
- b) The School District's *Code of Conduct on School Property* applies to the use of District technology and Social Media.
- c) A student may not use the school-based social media, including blog/web 2.0 tools, to violate the Watervliet City School District's *Code of Conduct on School Property* by plagiarizing, cheating, forging, or using copyrighted material without permission.
- d) A student may not publish links to inappropriate websites.
- e) A student will use appropriate language. Offensive language will not be accepted.
- f) A student will not use social media, including blogs/web 2.0 tools, to harass or bully others in any way.
- g) A student must respect the privacy of others at all times.
- h) A student must understand that there will be consequences for misuse of the school- based social media, including blogs/web 2.0 tools, as per the Acceptable Use Policy and the School District's *Code of Conduct on School Property*.

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- i) The misuse of personal or home-based social media, depending on its potential effect on the health, safety and welfare of students/others and the maintenance of the educational setting in school, may result in referral to law enforcement and/or student or employee discipline in accordance with law and regulation.

**Social Media Policy for Teachers**

- a) A teacher will register his/her social media for school-based learning with the Watervliet City Office of Technology by contacting the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.
- b) A teacher will provide students with the Watervliet City School District's Use of Social Media Policy and actively review the policy several times during the school year.
- c) Students must read and sign the Watervliet City School District's Use of Social Media Policy before participating in any social media activity.
- d) A teacher will teach students safe and appropriate behavior as social media authors and readers.
- e) A teacher will recognize the social media as a closed conversation for members of the class and will not open the site to any person who is not a participant in the class, except for others whose presence on the site supports the educational goals and objectives of the lesson who have been pre-approved by the teacher.
- f) A teacher will actively monitor the social media for cyber-bullying, offensive language or images, and other material that violates the Use of Social Media Policy or other policies of the District.
- g) A teacher will protect student privacy at all times by not publishing identifying information such as address, email address, or telephone number.
- h) All social media must have a direct correlation to subject material taught in class and will not be used for personal social networking.
- i) Teachers must enforce consequences for social media misuse. They must report violations to the Building Principal.

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**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND SIGNATURE PAGE**

I have read and understand the Watervliet City School District's Use of Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

\_\_\_\_ Student

\_\_\_\_ Teacher

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

