Coast Mountains Board of Education School District 82

SECTION 2000: PERSONNEL

POLICY 2045: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- *Modeled from School District 42 (Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows) Social Media Guidelines*

POLICY STATEMENT

Coast Mountains School District 82 ("CMSD82") is committed to ensuring that all students and staff, who utilize social media technology for professional purposes, do so in a safe and responsible manner. School District 82 strives to create professional social media environments that mirror the academically supportive environments of our schools.

RATIONALE

Social media technology can serve as a powerful tool to enhance education, communication, and learning. This technology can provide both educational and professional benefits, including preparing CMSD82 students to succeed in their educational and career endeavors.

POLICY

This Social Media Policy provides direction regarding recommended practices for professional social media communication between CMSD82 employees, as well as social media communication between CMSD82 employees and students.

In recognition of the public and pervasive nature of social media communications, as well as the fact that in this digital era, the lines between professional and personal endeavors are sometimes blurred, this policy also addresses caveats for use of personal social media by staff.

This policy does not address student-to-student communication via social media. Each school has a procedure that is specific to student use of technology and social media.

Coast Mountains Board of Education School District 82

LEGISLATION/REGULATIONS

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA): Sections 8, 17, 20, 22, 65 and 85
- *Copyright Act*

A.   DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, internet websites, internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Flickr, TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram.

1.   **Professional social media** is a work-related social media activity that is either support services based or school based (e.g., a CMSD82 principal establishing a Facebook page for his/her school or a CMSD82 teacher establishing a blog for his/her class).

2.   **Personal social media** use is a non- work-related social media activity (e.g., a CMSD82 employee establishing a Facebook page or a Twitter account for his/her own personal use).

B.   APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all CMSD82 employees at all locations.

C.   PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

1.   Maintenance of Separate Professional and Personal Email Accounts

CMSD82 employees who decide to engage in professional social media activities must maintain separate professional (CMSD82 email) and personal email addresses (Gmail, etc.). As such, CMSD82 employees must not use their personal email address for professional social media activities. The professional social media presence will utilize a CMSD82 email address and must be completely separate from any personal social media presence maintained by the CMSD82 employee.

C.   PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE *(continued)*

2.   Communication with CMSD82 Students

CMSD82 employees who work with students and communicate[1] with students through professional social media sites[2] will follow these guidelines:

a. Professional social media sites that are school-based will be designed to address reasonable instructional, educational or extra-curricular program matters;

i. On school-based professional social media sites that involve CMSD82 students, CMSD82 employees will use the sites for professional purposes only. CMSD82 employees are not to review any personal social media accounts created by their students.

b. Professional social media sites that are non-school based will have a reasonable relationship to the mission and function of the CMSD82 organization creating the site;

c. CMSD82 employees will inform their supervisor before setting up a professional social media presence and acknowledge they have read and understood the CMSD82 Social Media Policy;

d. Professional CMSD82 social media sites should include language identifying the sites as professional social media CMSD82 sites. For example, the professional sites can identify the CMSD82 school, department or particular grade that is utilizing the site and be linked to the school website.

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[1] The term "communicates", as used, refers to activity, including, but not limited to, "friending," "following," "commenting," and "posting messages" using social media sites.

[2] The term "site" and "sites" refer to an online social media account or usage.

C.   PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

3.   Guidance Regarding Professional Social Media Sites

a. CMSD82 employees will treat professional social media space and communication like a classroom and/or a professional workplace. The same standards expected in CMSD82 professional settings are expected on professional social media sites;

b. CMSD82 employees will exercise caution, sound judgment, and common sense when using professional social media sites;

c. CMSD82 employees will use privacy settings to control access to their professional social media sites to ensure that professional social media communications only reach the employees' intended audience. However, CMSD82 employees should be aware that there are limitations to privacy settings. Private communication published on the internet can easily become public. Furthermore, social media sites can change their current default privacy settings and other functions. Employees are responsible for understanding the rules of the social media site being utilized prior to utilizing the site;

d. Professional social media communication must be in compliance with existing school district regulations, CMSD82 policies and applicable laws, including, but not limited to, prohibitions on the disclosure of confidential information and prohibitions on the use of harassing, obscene, discriminatory, defamatory or threatening language;

e. No personally identifiable student information may be posted by CMSD82 employees on professional social media sites, including student photographs, without the consent of the students' parents.

4.   Monitoring of Professional Social Media Sites

a. Employees using professional social media have no expectation of privacy with regard to their use of such media;

b. CMSD82 administrators reserve the right to remove, disable, and provide feedback regarding professional social media sites that do not adhere to the law or do not reasonably align with this Policy;

C. PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

4.   Monitoring of Professional Social Media Sites *(continued)*

   c. To assist in monitoring, as a recommended practice to the extent possible, the default setting for comments on professional social media sites should be turned off or moderated regularly. If the default setting for comments is turned on, the comments on the site must be monitored on a daily basis by the user;

   d. When establishing professional social media sites, staff will consider the intended audience for the site and consider the level of privacy assigned to the site, specifically, whether the site should be a private network (for example, it is limited to a particular class or particular grade within a school) or a public network (for example, anyone within the school or a larger group within the CMSD82 community can participate). It is a recommended practice for professional social media sites to be private networks, unless there is a specific educational need for the site to be a public network; and

   e. CMSD82 administrators will maintain documentation of all reported non-compliant communications as well as any violations that are otherwise brought to the supervisor's attention (reference Section 10 within Social Media Policy).

5.   Media Inquiries

   Any media inquiries received via professional social media sites should be referred to the Superintendent of Schools and/or Secretary Treasurer.

D. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

1.   Communication with CMSD82 Students

   In order to maintain a professional and appropriate relationship with students, CMSD82 employees should not communicate[3] with students who are currently enrolled in CMSD82 schools on personal social media sites.

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[3] Examples of such communications include, but are not limited to, "friending", "following", "commenting", and posting messages.

D. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE *(continued)*

2. Guidance Regarding Personal Social Media Sites

Employees should exercise caution and common sense when using personal social media sites:

a. As a recommended practice, employees are encouraged to use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal social media sites. However, be aware that there are limitations to privacy settings. Private communication published on the internet can easily become public. Furthermore, social media sites can change their current default privacy settings and other functions. As a result, employees have an personal responsibility to understand the rules of the social media site being utilized;

b. CMSD82 employees will not "tag" photos of other employees without the prior permission of the individuals being tagged;

c. Personal social media use, including off-hours use, has the potential to result in disruption at school and/or the workplace, and can be in violation of the **Internet and Network Acceptable Use Procedures and**;

d. The posting or disclosure of personally identifiable student information or confidential information via personal social media sites is prohibited.

E. APPLICABILITY OF CMSD82 POLICIES AND OTHER LAWS

1. This policy provides direction intended to supplement, not supersede, existing CMSD82 policies and procedures. Users of professional social media sites are responsible for complying with all applicable federal, provincial and local legislation.

2. This policy is not designed to serve as a code of conduct for social media use. However, all existing CMSD82 policies and procedures, and legislation that cover employee conduct may be applicable in the social media environment.

F.   ADDITIONAL INQUIRIES

This document is meant to provide general guidance and not cover every potential social media situation. Should any questions arise, please contact your school principal or supervisor. As this policy addresses rapidly changing technology, CMSD82 will regularly revisit this policy and will update as needed.

G.   FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(FAQs) Overview

1.   Why is CMSD82 issuing guidance regarding social media?

Social media technology offers many educational benefits. CMSD82 is issuing this policy to provide expectations of conduct and practices for employees to take advantage of this technology in a manner that encourages professionalism, responsibility, safety and awareness.

Getting Started

2.   What if CMSD82 employees are already using social media for either professional or personal purposes?

Professional social media use: CMSD82 employees currently using social media for professional purposes should examine whether their use aligns with the Social Media policy and these FAQs. Any use not consistent with these documents should be altered or amended within a reasonable period of time. We will answer any questions or address any concerns during training and feedback sessions. If employees have linked their social media site to a personal email address, they should transition the site to a professional email address.

Personal social media use: CMSD82 employees who use social media for personal purposes will take steps to remove current CMSD82 students, subject to the exceptions listed in this policy, from those sites[1]. Additionally, employees will review all of the Social Media Policy and FAQs to ensure familiarity with the recommended practices.

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[1] No exceptions are included in current policy.

G. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Getting Started *(continued)*

3. What are some types of common social media?

    Blogs - Short for "web-logs", these are sites that can function as ongoing journals with multiple entries.   Typically, entries are categorized with "tags" for easy searching. Most blogs allow for reader comments. Examples: *Blogger, WordPress, TypePad.*

    Micro-Blogs - These blogs allow for shorter content posts, typically with a limited set of typed characters allowed. Micro-blogs can be used for status updates and to quickly communicate information to "friends" or "followers." Examples: *Twitter, Tumblr.*

    Networking - These sites allow people to connect with each other around common interests, pursuits and other categories. Examples: *Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, Ning.*

    Photo/Video - These sites allow people to share videos, images, slideshows and other media. Often these sites allow viewers to comment and share posted content. Examples: *YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr, Snapchat, TikTok.*

4. What should CMSD82 employees who want to develop professional social media for their classroom, school, or office do?

    Employees need to review the Social Media Policy and FAQs periodically to ensure that they are familiar with their contents and are aware of any updates.

    Employees need to research and familiarize themselves with the social media site they intend to utilize. For example, if the proposed professional social media use involves students, employees are required to review the social media site's regulations and determine whether children under a certain age are allowed to use the site. In addition, employees should, for example, understand the default privacy and viewing settings for the social media site. Where possible, we recommend that employees establish group pages, rather than individual profiles, for educational purposes.

G.   FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Monitoring

5.   Who monitors professional social media sites and how frequently are they monitored?

Professional social media sites may be reviewed or monitored by administrators or their designates, such as a webmaster, from time to time. Employees who decide to establish professional social media sites will advise administrators of the professional social media site they engage in and the school administrator may perform a review of their specific site.

Student Communication

6.   Does this policy apply to CMSD82 students?

This policy does not address student-to-student communication via social media.

7.   How should CMSD82 employees respond to "friend" requests by current CMSD82 students on their personal social media sites and accounts?

If CMSD82 employees receive a request from a current CMSD82 student to connect or communicate through a personal social media site, they should refuse the request. The following language is one suggested response:

"Please do not be offended if I do not accept or respond to your request. As a CMSD82 employee, the school district's Social Media Policy does not permit interactions with current CMSD82 students on personal social media sites. If you do want to connect, please contact me through the school (or class) page at_[insert link]."

Personal Use

8.   May CMSD82 employees using social media for personal use communicate with CMSD82 colleagues?

G. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Personal Use *(continued)*

This policy does not address communication between employees on personal social media sites. CMSD82 employees who use personal social media are encouraged to use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal social media sites.

9.   Why is it a recommended practice to have separate professional and personal social media sites and email addresses?

The reason for this distinction is to ensure separation between personal and professional spheres of online communication for CMSD82 employees. In this context, this separation is intended to clarify that professional social media use and personal social media use are different. Professional social media is work-related and may involve employee-to-student communication. Personal social media use is not work-related, and subject to certain exceptions noted in this policy.

Reporting

10. What should employees or CMSD82 administrators and/or their designates do when they discover or receive a report of inappropriate activity?

A CMSD82 administrator or designates who discovers or receives a report of inappropriate or questionable content posted on a professional social media site should contact the Director of Human Resources for assistance.

In addition, if other members of a school community find inappropriate material on a professional social media site, they are encouraged to report it to a CMSD82 administrator or follow the process outlined in the school district's Whistleblower policy.

11. How can CMSD82 employees determine what constitutes confidential information or personally identifiable student information that should not be posted or disclosed?

If CMSD82 employees have any questions about what constitutes confidential information or personally identifiable student information, they should contact the Superintendent of Schools.