

Central Community Unit School District #3

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Social Media Guidelines

Central CUSD#3 Schools recognizes the growing importance of social media and web 2.0 tools as a means of communications, including its use for personal and educational purposes, and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment to speak out on matters of public concern. Central CUSD # 3 encourages the appropriate use of social media as a means to communicate, whether as an individual or as a school or related program if such use would be helpful in reaching out to the district's various constituencies.

However, the District has the right to regulate the speech of employees in specific circumstances.

Accordingly, it is essential that employees conduct themselves in such a way that their personal and/or educational use of social media does not adversely affect their position with the District.

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish protocols for the use of social media by employees and to outline expectations for its use. Social media includes websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, or other social media and web 2.0 tools.

Expectations for the educational use of social media

- All CUSD#3 policies and state laws on the use of district-owned hardware, software and networks apply, as relevant, to the use of social media for a CUSD#3 school, class or program.
- Notify your administrator if you wish to establish a social media site for a school, class or program.
- If using Facebook, create an organization page for your school, class or program; do NOT use a personal Facebook page for school-related purposes.
- Establish expectations for acceptable use on your social media site (see example at end of document).
- Do not post anything that advocates for or against a political candidate or initiative.
- Do not post images that include students without parental release forms on file.
- Pay close attention to the site's security settings and allow only approved participants access to the site. (No comments should be allowed by non-admin site members)
- Behavior that is inappropriate in the classroom should be considered inappropriate online.

Expectations for all use of social media

- CUSD#3 employees' online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration they adhere to in their face-to-face interactions.
- Do not submit or post confidential or protected information about the District, its students, alumni or employees. You should assume that most information about a student is protected from disclosure by both federal law (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Disclosure of confidential or protected information may result in liability for invasion of privacy or defamation and result in disciplinary action up to, and including, discharge from employment.

- Report, as required by law, any information found on a social networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines.
- Do not use language that could be considered defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. And exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
- Consider whether a particular posting puts your professional reputation and effectiveness as a CUSD#3 employee at risk.
- Be cautious of security risks when using third-party applications that work with the social networking site.
- Run updated malware protection to avoid infections of spyware and adware that social networking sites might place on your personal computer.
- Be alert to the possibility of phishing scams that arrive through a social media site.

Anyone who wishes to establish a social media site for a class or program must receive permission from their administrator before creating the social media page.

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