

AP 401 – Social Media - Employees

Background

This procedure has been developed to provide employees with guidelines to understand the impact of social media and its appropriate use in order to ensure best practices and to mitigate both the school district's and employee's exposure to risk. (see also AP 417 – Information and Communication Services)

Procedures

1. Terms of Reference
 - 1.1 Social media includes but is not limited to: social networks, digital citizenship, digital footprint, social bookmarking, internet, email, smartphones, devices, blogging, tweeting, wikis, podcasts, video casts, video, audio, media, social bookmarking, texting, postings through apps using mobile devices using iOS or Android operating systems and also including current top examples: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Edmodo, Google Drive, Google+, Hangout, Skype, Texting, Facetime, X-box, PlayStation, and Minecraft.
2. Any use of social media related to work or school that involves students and/or Abbotsford School District employees must be of a professional rather than a personal nature and adhere to professional codes of conduct. Online activities must not interfere with the performance of an employee's duties.
3. Use of social networking websites and services must adhere to the *British Columbia [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)* (FOIPPA) and the guidelines for teachers from the BC Ministry of Education Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB), particularly where issues related to personal information are concerned.

Educators act with integrity, maintaining the dignity and credibility of the profession. They understand that their individual conduct contributes to the perception of the profession as a whole. Educators are accountable for their conduct while on duty, as well as off duty, where that conduct has an effect on the education system. Educators have an understanding of the [education system](#) in BC and the law as it related to their duties.
4. Employees are responsible for ensuring that any use of social media with students complies with the social media terms of service agreement.
5. Personal information should be kept to a minimum and a disclaimer/permission slip must be signed by parents/guardians.

6. Anything posted in an official capacity will be perceived to be representative of the Abbotsford School District. All employees are encouraged to model an appropriate online presence and to exercise good judgment to ensure that postings do not reflect negatively on the employee's professional reputation or that of the school district. Employees should not speak on behalf of the district or use district logos on private social media sites unless specifically authorized to do so.
7. Employee online behaviour should reflect the Abbotsford School District values of respect, trust, integrity, communication, and teamwork. Social media is an extension of the workplace. What is inappropriate in the workplace is also inappropriate online including criticizing students, employees or the school district.
8. Abbotsford School District employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online.
9. Employees should monitor contributions to any site they create, administer or moderate.
10. Any use of social media that involves students must be focused on teaching and learning and not be linked to personal sites.
11. School district tools are to be used for online communication with students and parents. Content must be formal, courteous and respectful and relevant to school related matters. Should employees wish to create other sites and/or use other online forums for communicating with students, they must obtain approval from the principal.
12. Abbotsford School District employees must not 'friend' students to their personal social media sites.
13. Employees must respect and model copyright and fair use guidelines. A hyperlink citation to outside sources is required. Employees must not plagiarize and must also give credit where it is due. When using a hyperlink, employees must be sure that the content of the linked site is appropriate and adheres to district and provincial standards.
14. Employees should ask friends not to tag them in any photos or videos without their permission and remove anything that is not appropriate to the employee's role in the school district. Videos or pictures of workplace events should not be posted without permission.
15. Employees who do not follow these terms and conditions may face disciplinary action.

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