



## **Mountain Song Community School Social Media Policy**

### **What is Social Media?**

Effective communication with colleagues, students, and families is vital for a thriving school environment where all stakeholders feel heard and engaged. Social media and digital communication devices and methods offer a means by which staff can quickly communicate with others, share information, and exchange ideas.

Social media includes online electronic tools that may be used by parents, teachers, and school employees to communicate with each other. Specific examples of popular social media tools include image sharing (i.e. Flickr, Picasa, Photobucket, Shutterfly, Instagram), video sharing (i.e. YouTube, MyDSD, Ustream), social networking (i.e. Facebook/Twitter), blogs, wikis, and discussion boards. Mountain Song Community School recognizes both the educational value and dangers of social networking sites.

When using social media, there is often no line between public and private, personal and professional. This policy establishes general social networking/media guidelines for Mountain Song Community School (MSCS) employees and members of the Board of Directors ("Board") when sharing thoughts, views and perspectives - as an MSCS representative - on social media. (For the purposes of this policy, the term "employee" shall include all persons employed by the school and member of the Board.)

### **School-Related Social Media**

School-related social media includes:

- Employee-created or maintained social media presence (i.e., personas or accounts and associated content) whose recipients or participants include students or parents whom the employee knows primarily by reason of the employee's employment; or
- Social media presence created or maintained by an employee at the direction of his/her supervisor or in furtherance of his/her employment responsibilities with school equipment or resources.

### **Personal Social Media**

- This policy does not prohibit or apply to personal or private social media used by employees acting outside of the scope of their employment using personal technology.
- Employees who maintain personal social networking sites should carefully consider whether or not to allow MSCS students to access their personal sites.

- Employees should restrict the use of personal technology and social media for personal purposes to non-work times or hours. Social media use should not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school or working environment or its operation.

## **Guidelines**

The following guidelines are meant to provide general guidance and do not cover every potential social media or digital communication situation.

Employees shall maintain distinct and separate social media accounts for all school-related communications. These accounts should not co-mingle with personal accounts.

### **Use good judgment**

- Use good judgment in all situations, particularly in the world of social networking/media
- Respect the privacy of students, parents, and other staff.
- Maintain a tone that is positive, respectful, and inclusive. Refer to the MSCS Communications Policy for additional guidance.

### **Be transparent**

- Even as an MSCS employee, unless one is specifically authorized to represent the MSCS as a spokesperson, one must state that the views expressed in postings are his or her own.
- Limit discussion of work-related matters to your area of job responsibility.
- Be open about your affiliation with MSCS and your role/position held.

### **Maintain confidentiality of private information**

Employees shall not publish, post, or release employee, student, parent, or community-member information that is considered confidential or not public. Online “conversations” are never private.

- “Personal information” includes, but is not limited to:
  - Social security numbers
  - Financial information of any kind
  - Home address and personal phone numbers
  - Personal Schedules and timetables
  - Health information
- Never give out or transmit student or co-worker personal information of.
- Always respect the privacy of our students and families.
- Do not post pictures of others (students, families, or other staff) without their permission. For students, please check to ensure that they have a signed Media Permission slip on file with the Front Office.
- If it seems confidential, it probably is. If there is a question about what is considered confidential, consult the ELT for guidance.
- Be careful about the type and amount of personal information provided. Avoid talking about class schedules or individual situations.

**Be cautious and conscientious**

- A significant part of interaction on Twitter, Facebook and MSCS's website involves passing on relevant content or linking to other posts. Before reposting a link, review and consider the content first and fact-checking any suspicious claims or information
- Use common sense and good judgment when posting content; try to avoid material that could be considered misinformation, inflammatory, or controversial.
- When using Twitter, Facebook and other social media services, always follow terms and conditions.