

Policy Guide



Policy No. 863
 Section OPERATIONS
 Title SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
 Adopted DECEMBER 12, 2017
 Revised _____

POLICY NO. 863		
SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS		
Section 1	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>The Board recognizes that electronic communication and social networking are tools that allow faculty and staff to network within professional learning communities, share valuable resources and information, and stay up-to-date with current events. Social media applications and electronic communications, when used by the District, present an opportunity to connect with students, families, the community, and faculty/staff in a positive and efficient way.</p> <p>While the District acknowledges the value of these tools; it also recognizes that there is a greater risk for impropriety, cyber-bullying, inappropriate behavior and other potential dangers.</p> <p>With a heightened concern for student privacy, safety and well-being, and to ensure that the educational environment is safe and conducive to learning, the Board has set forth this policy and its expectations for staff in using electronic communication tools and social media.</p>	
Section 2	<p><u>Authority</u></p> <p>This policy applies to district employees and/or anyone in a Board authorized position. These individuals are expected to abide by all guidelines as set forth in Policy No. 847 Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries when utilizing electronic communications and/or social media.</p>	Pol. 847

	<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY NO. 863 SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>The Board authorizes the use of social media and electronic communication for the purpose of communicating and promoting District-wide, building-level, or classroom events or activities subject to the guidelines set forth in Board Policy.</p> <p>Section 3 <u>Definitions</u></p> <p>Electronic communication – Any communication transmitted by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant or pager. Electronic communications include, but are not limited to, emails, instant messages and communications made by means of an Internet website, including social media and other networking websites.</p> <p>Social Media – Any medium hosted on the Internet on which interactions between students or between staff and students can be conducted. This includes web-based and mobile-based technologies that support interactive communication between organizations, communities, and individuals that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.</p> <p>District Associated Accounts – Electronic accounts such as email and social media accounts that are for the express purpose of communicating and promoting District wide, building-level, and/or classroom events or activities. While these accounts may be administered by central office administration, they do not have to be. All District associated accounts and the content of those accounts are the property of the District.</p>	<p>Pol. 847</p>
<p>Section 3</p>	<p><u>Guidelines</u></p> <p>The District respects employees’ personal rights and decisions to participate in the use of social media networks for personal use on personal time. However, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communication that violates Pa. School Code, state laws, or federal laws, or District policies.</p> <p>The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. When employees choose to join or engage with District students, families or fellow employees through District approved social media context, they are advised to maintain their professionalism as District</p>	<p>Pol. 847</p>

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employees and have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks, including requirements for mandated reporting.

Establishing District Associated Accounts

Employees who wish to host district associated accounts for the express purpose of communicating and promoting District-wide, building-level, and/or classroom events or activities shall notify the Superintendent or his/her designee. The account owner must indicate in the account profile that this is a District associated account and not a personal account. District associated accounts shall include the name of the District (Keystone Oaks or an abbreviation thereof) and/or the building name in the title. Accounts created before the adoption date of this policy are not required to include the name of the District (Keystone Oaks or an abbreviation thereof) and/or the building name in the title, but are highly encouraged.

District-Associated Accounts shall be established to supplement, not replace, official District communication that is handled by the Communications Department and the Superintendent's Office. Announcements regarding awards or designations, test scores, conference presentations, student and employee achievements, district initiatives or programs, emergency situations, and other items as determined by the Superintendent or his designee, should first be released by the Communications Department before they are released by an employee, unless prior permission is granted.

Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited and will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

1. Fraternization with students using any social media or electronic communication. This would include, but not be limited to private/direct messages to a student or a group of students that would not be visible to the public or to a school administrator.
2. Electronic communication to students or staff members of a sexual or explicit nature.

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3. Electronic communication to a student or students of content condoning or advocating the use of alcohol, drugs, and/or other illicit or illegal activities between students and staff.
4. Communication of private information regarding students or staff over social media platforms even if it is via a direct message. This information may only be communicated electronically via District email.
5. Providing one's personal email address or personal social media to students.

All District electronic correspondence must go through District email, District approved email, and social media unless authorized by the superintendent or designee.

6. Contacting students via their personal cell phones or personal email addresses without written parental/guardian consent and authorization by the Superintendent or designee.
7. Electronic communication which violates content restrictions under guidelines in Policy 920 – Commercial Advertising on School Property/Website.
8. Sharing pictures or names of students on personal social media accounts without the consent of the parent/guardian for any child under 17 years of age and without the consent of a child 17 years of age or older.
9. Accepting payment of any type in return for posting/endorsing content on social media platforms without prior approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee.
10. Any implicit action such as sharing a post/link, hashtags, liking/following another user/page etc. that would violate any of the above guidelines. Employees should be aware that liking, sharing, posting, tweeting and re-tweeting content on District-Associated Social Media Accounts may be viewed as an endorsement of or advertisement

	<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY NO. 863 SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>for a product, opinion, company, individual, etc. Employees who share content from third-party sites or sources should use caution that the post does not violate any of the guidelines in Policy 920: Commercial Advertising on School Property/Website.</p> <p><u><i>Social Media Use During the School Day</i></u></p> <p>Social media activities by District employees using District Associated Accounts, for the purpose of communicating District-wide, building-level, or classroom events or activities, are encouraged to take place in a classroom or school office setting so long as such activities do not detract from the employee's' effectiveness or other job duties. This includes posting to blogs, forums, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, Tumblr and YouTube) and any other web-based communications on publicly available sites.</p> <p>When participating in social media activities, even off-duty and off-premises, such activities must not violate any Board policies or otherwise interfere with the employee's or co-workers' job performance. The Board expects all employees to exercise professionalism and good judgment in any social media activity, as outlined in this policy and the Social Media Guidelines & Procedures. Furthermore, any social media activity must comply with all applicable laws including, but not limited to, anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, copyright, trademark, defamation, privacy, securities, and any other applicable laws and regulations.</p> <p><u><i>Social Media Use on Personal Devices</i></u></p> <p>Employees may possess and use their personal electronic devices at school and during school related activities, subject to Policy No. 815: Employee Use of Personal Electronic Devices. Employees may access District associated social media accounts during the school day for the purpose of sharing District wide, building level, and classroom information and activities.</p> <p>Employees may take photographs and record audio or video during the school day solely for the purpose of sharing photos, audio and video on District associated social media accounts.</p>	<p>Pol. 815, 862</p> <p>Pol. 815</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY NO. 863 SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>The use of such photographs, audio and/or video must be in compliance with state and federal laws. No student’s information should be used without prior consent of the parents.</p> <p><i>Protection of Sensitive Data and Information</i></p> <p>All employees of the District have obligations under federal law to protect students’ personally identifiable information and certain personal employee information from any unauthorized disclosure or release. Employees must comply with all applicable laws and shall exercise caution, and utilize appropriate security measures, such as password protection on their electronic device, to prevent any unauthorized access to sensitive data. In no case shall employees store sensitive data locally on the hard drive or internal memory of the employee’s personal electronic device.</p> <p>Photographs, student names, name of school attended and grade level information are considered Directory information which can be made public without specific consent of the parents/guardians or eligible students. Directory information would not generally be considered harmful or invasion of privacy if disclosed.</p> <p>If a parent/guardian or eligible student does not consent to the automatic release of directory information, the parent/guardian or eligible student must, on an annual basis, sign a form opting-out of the automatic release of any directory information. It is the parent/guardian’s or eligible student’s responsibility to resubmit this form on an annual basis.</p> <p>The opt-out form, 216-AR-1 Release of Directory Information “Opt Out”, can be found attached to Policy 216 Student Records. It is available on the district website and in district publications.</p> <p>Employees are responsible for maintaining a current list of students whose photos are not permitted to appear on social media, websites or in District publications.</p>	<p>20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232(g) 34 CFR Part 99 65 P.S. 67.101</p> <p>34 CFR Part 99 Pol. 216</p>
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<p>Section 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY NO. 863 SOCIAL MEDIA/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p><u>Delegation of Responsibility</u></p> <p>The Superintendent shall develop procedures to implement this policy, and shall delegate to his/her designee(s) the right to enforce this policy.</p> <p>The Superintendent shall ensure that all employees are made aware of this policy and any administrative guidelines by means of the employee handbook, the District website, or other reasonable means of written notification.</p> <p>References:</p> <p>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g</p> <p>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations – 34 CFR Part 99</p> <p>Right-to-Know Law – 65 P.S. Sec. 67.701</p> <p>Board Policy – 216, 815, 862</p>	