

**Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools  
Independent School District #2172  
Wanamingo, Minnesota**

Adopted: 3-27-2017

**Policy 428 - Employee Use of Social Media**

(Portions of this policy were adapted with the expressed permission of the  
Austin Public Schools, Austin, MN effective January 12, 2017.)

**I. Purpose**

As part of the goals within its strategic plan, the School District aims to improve organizational effectiveness and strong community engagement through increased communication. It also aims to embrace technology to further the learning of staff and students. The School District also recognizes its obligation to teach and ensure responsible and safe use of technology.

This policy addresses employees' use of publicly available social media networks including: personal websites, blogs, wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media. The District takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks for personal use on personal time when that use is consistent with the Code of Ethics For Minnesota Teachers, other District policies, as well as state and federal laws. However, personal use of social media during District time or on District equipment is prohibited.

**II. General Statement of Policy**

The School District recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and electronic learning tool. Toward that end, the District provides password-protected social media tools and District-approved technologies for electronic learning and encourages the use of District tools for collaboration by employees. Public social media networks, outside of those sponsored by the District, may not be used for classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities without the prior authorization of the Superintendent or designee, and parental consent for student participation on social networks. The District may use these tools and other communication technologies in reaching its aim for effective communication with the public.

Employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communication that violates the criteria cited in item I. 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 in a social media context that exists outside those approved by the District, they are advised to maintain their professionalism as District employees and have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks, including requirements for mandated reporting.

**III. Requirements**

The School District expects that all employees promote safety and serve as a positive role model for students. Any action by an employee may be perceived by members of the school community or the general public as representative of the District. Therefore, the District requires employees to observe the following rules when referring to the District, its schools, students, programs, activities, employees, volunteers and communities on any social media networks:

A. An employee's use of any social media network and an employee's postings, displays, or

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communication on any social media network must comply with all state and federal laws and any applicable District Policies.

Employees must be respectful and professional in all communications (by word, image or other means). Employees shall not use obscene, profane or vulgar language on any social media network or engage in communications or conduct that is harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory or that discusses or encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, or bullying.

Employees should not use their District e-mail address for communications on public social media networks that have not been approved by the district.

Employees must make clear that any views expressed are the employee's alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the District. Employees may not act as a spokesperson for the District or post comments as a representative of the District, except as authorized by the Superintendent or designee.

When authorized as a spokesperson for the District, employees must disclose their employment relationship with the District.

Employees and volunteers may not disclose information on any social media network that is confidential or proprietary to the District, its students, or employees or that is protected by data privacy laws.

Employees may not use or post the District name, District logo, or school logo (defined as the school board approved Knight, Knights in Training, Little Knights, or the alternate alpha K-W logo) without permission from the Superintendent or designee.

1. Employees will remove images posted on any social media network of co-workers or students upon request.
  2. Employees may not post the names or images of students that have completed an objection to media release on file with the district. This does not include directory information or images of students taken in the public arena such as at sporting or fine arts events.
  3. Employees may not post any nonpublic images of the District premises and property including floor plans or safety procedures.
- B. The terms of this policy remain in effect when employees join or engage in school related social media networks that are not operated by the District or the employee.
- C. Employees who participate in social media networks may decide to include information about their work with the District, as part of their personal profile, as it would relate to a typical social conversation. This may include:
1. District name, job title and duties.
  2. Status updates regarding the employees own promotions or recognitions.
  3. Personal participation in District-sponsored events, including volunteer activities.
- D. An employee who is responsible for a social media network posting that fails to comply

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with the rules and guidelines set forth in this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or the content of anything posted on any social media network.

- E. Anything posted on an employee's website, blog, or other internet and social media networks which the employee is responsible for will be subject to all District policies, handbooks, and administrative directives. The District is free to view and monitor an employee's public postings at any time without consent or prior approval. Where applicable, employees may be asked to disclose to the District the existence of and to provide the District with access to an employee's professional website or social media postings as part of an employment selection, promotion, or disciplinary process.

**Legal References:**

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) 2011

Minnesota Administrative Rule 8700.7500 Code of Ethics For Minnesota Teachers

**Cross References:**

District Policy 524 – Acceptable Use of the Internet