

Employee Computer and Internet Use



I. Purpose

MCSD recognizes the educational value inherent in the responsible use of Social Media. MCSD also recognizes, however, that potential misuse of these sites by employees or students may harm the safety, reputations, and/or careers of those involved, as well as to the reputation of the District and the teaching profession in general.

The purpose of this policy is to establish rules and guidelines for the acceptable use of social media by MCSD employees. This policy sets forth regulations governing: 1) the use and management of Professional Social Media Accounts by authorized users on behalf of a school and 2) the use of Personal Social Media Accounts by MCSD employees.

In addition to the rules and guidelines contained within this policy, an employee's use of social media may also be subject to applicable rules contained in other MCSD policies or other applicable law, rules, or regulations.

II. Definitions

"Social Media" means any internet-based technology or website that facilitates or promotes interactive communication, participation or collaboration. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, the websites or applications Blogger, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Tumblr, Foursquare, Meetup.com, Flickr, YouTube, Yelp, Second Life, and Wikipedia and the interactive tools and functions they provide to users.

"Social Media Content" means and includes any materials, documents, photographs, graphics and other information that is created, posted, or transmitted using Social Media.

"Social Media Account" means any account, or other method of private access, which allows the creation or posting of Social Media Content to any Social Media website or application.

"Professional Social Media Account(s)" means a social media account created and used for the sole purpose of creating Social Media Content related to MCSD activities and consistent with the terms and conditions contained herein.

"Personal Social Media Account(s)" means a social media account which is created and used by an individual for personal use or any other use unrelated to MCSD activities. Such accounts are not sanctioned, monitored, or approved by the MCSD.

III. Professional Social Media Accounts

A. Creation and Management of District-wide or School-wide

Professional Social Media Accounts

The MCSD central office may create and maintain Professional Social Media Accounts for the purpose of releasing general news and information. Schools, at the discretion of the principal, may also create and maintain Professional Social Media Accounts for such purposes. Schools which create and maintain Professional Social Media Accounts must add, at a minimum, the school principal or his/her designee

and the MCSD Public Information Officer or his/her designee as co-administrator or co-owner of any such Professional Social Media Accounts.

MCSD employees who are charged with creating or managing district-wide or school-wide Professional Social Media Accounts must refrain from allowing personal or political viewpoints to dictate the Social Media Content which is shared. Such employees are expected to post only important and relevant information which will be useful to and appreciated by the public. Such employees should use proper spelling and grammar in creating any such Social Media Content and must abstain from using "text talk" unless necessary to meet character limits. District-wide or school-wide Professional Social Media Accounts require commitment to ensure that such accounts remain an up-to-date source of information. Therefore, such employees are encouraged to post often. Examples of appropriate and post-worthy materials include, but are not limited to:

- Good news/What's happening at your school/site;
- Picture of the Day/Other school-related pictures;
- Event reminders;
- Congratulations on big accomplishments;
- Notifications related to school bus operations; or
- Emergency notifications (weather or otherwise).

MCSD employees charged with the management of any Professional Social Media Account may: 1) block subscribers who post abusive or inappropriate content or otherwise post content which would constitute a violation of any provision contained herein if posted by a MCSD Employee; or 2) delete comments that contain inappropriate Social Media Content or would otherwise constitute a violation of any provision contained herein if posted by a MCSD Employee.

MCSD does not expressly approve of or ensure the accuracy of any Social Media Content. Social Media Content shall not constitute a binding representation, agreement, offer, or endorsement on behalf of MCSD. Liking, linking, re-tweeting, or subscribing to another post or "fan page" does not constitute an endorsement on the part of MCSD of that post or "fan page's" creator, or of his or her opinion, product, or service; the same applies to comments posted by others to any Professional Social Media Accounts.

B. Creation and Management of other Professional Social Media Accounts by Teachers

In cases where an employee desires to use Social Media as an enhancement to his or her instructional or school-based responsibilities, the use of a Personal Social Media account is prohibited. Instead, the creation and use of a Professional Social Media Account may be appropriate for such purposes. Employees who desire to engage with students via a Professional Social Media Account must notify their administrator and provide a link to such Professional Social Media Account and also provide the username and password for such Professional Social Media Account. However, this requirement shall not be applied to require any employee to

provide their username or password for any Personal Social Media Accounts. Schools and departments should designate one administrator to be responsible for maintaining username and password information for Professional Social Media Accounts.

IV. Personal Social Media Accounts

MCSD employees are expected to comply with the standards set out herein when using a Personal Social Media Account.

In some instances, a MCSD employee's use of a Personal Social Media Account may reflect poorly on MCSD, may wrongly appear to represent a MCSD policy or opinion, or may wrongly appear to be on behalf of MCSD. For these reasons, Social Media Content posted on Personal Social Media Sites: 1) Shall not contain the MCSD logo or any likeness thereto; and 2) Shall not suggest or imply in any manner that such content is made or published on behalf of MCSD; 3) Shall not contain any information which refers to individual students.

Additionally, MCSD employees are strongly discouraged from each of the following activities with respect to a Personal Social Media Account.

1. Accepting or initiating invitations to "friend" students (family and relatives excluded) by otherwise providing students with direct access to an employee's Personal Social Media Account.
2. Engaging in private message exchanging with students (family and relatives excluded). All online conversations between a MCSD employee and a student should be carried out on the Social Media's public messaging or public comment area.

Employees shall refrain from using Personal Social Media Accounts during student contact hours.

V. Prohibited Uses of Social Media in General

MCSD Employees are prohibited from using Social Media (whether through the use of a Professional Social Media Account or a Personal Social Media Account) in any manner which:

1. Publishes or re-publishes any racial or ethnic slur, profanity, personal insult, or similar language;
2. Intentionally involves any MCSD employee in any dispute or conflict with other MCSD employees;
3. Intentionally interferes with the work or duties of any MCSD employee;
4. Intentionally disrupts the smooth and orderly operation of MCSD;
5. Intentionally creates or contributes to a harassing, demeaning, or hostile working environment for any MCSD employee;
6. Intentionally places in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgement of MCSD or any of its employees;
7. Intentionally harms the reputation of MCSD or intentionally casts MCSD in a bad light or tends to discredit MCSD;
8. Discloses any information about MCSD or its employees which might reasonably be considered to be private or confidential;
9. Discloses any information in violation of FERPA, as described in Section VI hereof;
10. Otherwise impairs or compromises his or her ability to interact with the public and/or to carry out the functions of his or her job; or
11. Otherwise violates any applicable law, rule, or regulation.

VI. FERPA Compliance

The disclosure of information regarding MCSD Students is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

As provided in the Annual Notification issued by MCSD, MCSD is authorized by FERPA to disclose certain routine information, referred to as "Directory Information", without consent. "Directory Information" includes the student's name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; grade level; enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time); dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. Notwithstanding any other provision contained herein, Social Media Content may not contain any further or other information regarding a MCSD student. Further, if a parent, guardian, or eligible student has exercised the right to opt-out of the disclosure of Directory information as explained in the MCSD Annual Notification regarding FERPA, then no such information regarding or related to that student may be contained or published within any Social Media Content.

V. Employee Discipline

In the event that any MCSD employee violates any provision contained herein, such employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and potentially including termination.

VI. Governing Law

If any provision of the Policy is inconsistent with any applicable State or Federal law, rule, or regulation, then such provision shall yield and the applicable law shall govern.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

Note: *The State of Georgia has moved the Georgia Code. This new environment no longer allows us to link directly to the Georgia Code. For example enter 20-02-0211 in the search window and the Georgia Code will appear.*

State Reference	Description
O.C.G.A 10-01-0912	Notification required upon breach of security regarding personal information
O.C.G.A 16-09-0090	Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act
O.C.G.A 16-09-0091	Computer Related Crime
O.C.G.A 16-09-0092	Definitions
O.C.G.A 16-09-0093	Computer crimes defined
O.C.G.A 16-09-0093.1	Misleading transmittal
O.C.G.A 16-09-0094	Violations
O.C.G.A 16-09-0122	Attempting or conspiring to attempt identity fraud

O.C.G.A 16-11-0037.1

O.C.G.A 16-12-0100.1

O.C.G.A 16-12-0100.2

Dissemination of information relating to terroristic acts

Electronically furnishing obscene material to minors

Computer or electronic pornography and child exploitation prevention

Please hold the **ctrl key down** and click on link below to submit a comment:

public.comments@mcintosh.k12.ga.us

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