

## **NEW Policy**

### **Policy 1114: District-Sponsored Social Media**

The Governing Board recognizes the value of technology, including social media platforms, in informing our community regarding issues or events relating to our students, staff, educational environment, facilities, and community involvement and collaboration. The purpose of any official district social media platform or use shall be to further the district's vision and mission, support student learning and staff professional development, and enhance positive communication with students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop content guidelines and protocols for official district social media platforms to ensure the appropriate and responsible use of these resources and compliance with law, Board policy, and regulation. No person or entity may directly or indirectly represent that any social media site or position is authorized by, or representative of, the District without advance and express approval by the Governing Board, Superintendent, or designee. The District reserves the right to seek the removal of any site or posting violating this provision, including a site or posting by a staff member initiated without such advance approval.

Official district social media platforms shall be used only for their stated purposes and in a manner consistent with all District policies and governing laws and regulations. By creating these official sites and allowing for public comment, the Board does not intend to create a limited public forum or otherwise guarantee an individual's right to free speech, as only District personnel expressly authorized by the Governing Board, Superintendent, or designee, or postings from community members to any authorized public forum in compliance with approved policies, may post to the District's social media sites.

The Superintendent or designee shall seek to ensure that the limited purpose of the official district social media platforms is communicated to users. Each site shall contain a statement that specifies the site's purposes, and a statement, if any portion of the site is available for public postings, that users are personally responsible for the content of their posts, and that all posts must strictly comply with the District's social media guidelines and protocols.

The Governing Board expects users to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner. District social media platforms may not contain content that is obscene, libelous, incites individuals to create a clear and present danger as to unlawful acts, including harm to persons or property, likely to substantially disrupt the District's orderly operations or the attendance and/or participation of students, staff, or community volunteers in district-sponsored activities. Users shall be made aware of the public nature and accessibility of social media, and that information posted on such sites may be considered a public record subject to disclosure, or further disclosure of referenced items, under the Public Records Act.

Staff, students, or volunteers who post prohibited content shall be subject to discipline in accordance with district policies and administrative regulations. Other users who post or cause to be posted content prohibited by this policy or associated content guidelines and protocols may be prohibited from making future posts, and their existing posts may be taken down without advance notice.

The Superintendent or designee shall also seek to protect the privacy rights of students, parents/guardians, staff, Board members, and other individuals on official district social media platforms, to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Social media and networking sites, and other online platforms, shall not be used by staff to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or district operations, and staff and other posts must never violate a person's right to privacy as may be protected by any District policy, law, or regulation.

### **FUSD: Social Media Guidelines and Protocols**

The District and its schools welcome the community's contributions (e.g., posting comments) to its official social media accounts. The purpose of the district's social media site(s) is to positively inform and engage students and their families, staff, residents, and other interested persons by providing current and useful information regarding district programs, activities, and operations. Such information shall be appropriate for both internal and external audiences.

The intent of these Social Media Guidelines and Protocols, which incorporate all District Policies and Administrative Regulations, is to best ensure a positive and informative flow of information while protecting the privacy and rights and other legally protected interests of our community. With these guidelines and protocols in mind, posting on any official social media site of the District constitutes an agreement by each user to comply with the following terms of use, a violation of which may result in the immediate removal of a nonconforming post and a potential prohibition against any future post, and a potential prohibition against any future posting by the violating party:

- Users are encouraged to submit comments, questions, and concerns directly to the appropriate District representative by way of email or telephone call. Social media posts are not the most efficient or effective way to communicate questions or concerns to District staff.
- By using the District's official social media sites or platforms, each user acknowledges that this is a limited forum, and not an open or limited public forum, the contents of which may be removed at the discretion and control of the District if they are seen as violating these guidelines and protocols. Comments should comply with these content standards and also have a direct relationship to a District post to which it relates. A user may request review by the Superintendent or designee of any post or comment believed to be in violation of these standards, which may then trigger removal. If the Superintendent or designee's review does not resolve the matter, the District's otherwise existing dispute resolution processes shall be used.
- The District will exercise its legal rights to regulate speech within the social media sites. All postings on a District authorized social media site are at the discretion of District and its social media site administrators except as directly and expressly governed by law.
- The District's social media sites administrators will review all postings to ensure they comply with all District Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, and these Social Media Guidelines and Protocols. The District's social media sites administrator will not, however, restrict speech based on a disagreement with the opinion expressed, if the posting otherwise meets the requirements of these social media policies, and all other governing standards, including a prohibition against harassment, retaliation, discrimination, the creation of a hostile work or educational environment, or a belief that physical or emotional harm barred by law or district policies may occur, or has occurred;

- The District also reserves the right to delete postings that:
  1. contain spam, advertising, solicitations, or include links to other sites (whether commercial or otherwise, and regardless of content or purpose of the link);
  2. cause or are reasonably likely to cause substantial disruption to the District's operations;
  3. violate a person's privacy, or that are objectively seen as verbal or emotional abuse, harassment, that advocate or support the concepts of stalking or threats of potential harm to person or property, or that may violate the legal rights of others;
  4. are actually or potentially libelous or slanderous;
  5. endorses any product, cause, political party, or political candidate;
  6. involves chain letters, pyramid schemes, or actually or potentially fraudulent or deceptive messages; and
  7. infringes on copyrights or trademarks.

If an individual becomes aware of a posting they believe violates these guidelines and protocols, the individual may contact the Superintendent at 707-786-5300, to have the post reviewed to determine a potential violation of these standards.

Policy: Ferndale Unified School District  
adopted:  
revised: