



## Social Media and Web Publishing

### Administrative Procedure 1.A.095

---

**Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: Policy 1, 2, 3, 16, 17**

**Legal Reference: Safe Schools Charter, FIFFA, MTS Professional Code of Conduct, Copyright Act (Canada), 1a.030 Code of Conduct, 1a.040 Complaints Against Staff, 1a.090 Information and Communication Technology, 2a.090 Staff Interactions with Students**

---

**Date Adopted: *May 13, 2019***

**Date Amended:**

**Date reviewed:**

---

#### 1. Rationale

- I. School District of Mystery Lake (The District) recognizes the advantages of centrally supporting the development of corporate and school-based social media accounts/sites through a process of open communication, and transparency. It also recognizes that the creation of social media accounts/sites enables individual schools to highlight initiatives and events and to make readily available school profiles and other educational links.
- II. This procedure has been developed to ensure effective and ethically appropriate use of social media within and for the District. Included are the minimum standards that must be met and maintained for all social media accounts and sites associated with the district to ensure board, schools, staff and students are represented in a positive, accurate and transparent manner, with an emphasis on protection of personal privacy.
- III. The board reserves the right to remove contact or websites that are not compliant with this procedure.

#### 2. Procedure:

##### a. General Guidelines

- The use of social media accounts and websites will be guided by the principles outlined in this procedure.
- All schools will be provided with a minimum standard board- hosted website.

- All board-related social media accounts and websites will provide a homepage-link to the main District website. All school-related social media accounts will provide a link to the school website. School websites will also provide a link back to the main District website.
- The District logo will appear on the homepage of all board-related social media accounts and websites.
- The content of all school and board social media accounts and/or websites must be consistent with the mission and values of the District and applicable board policies and procedures. Content posted to school and board-related social media accounts/sites should be positive in tone, informative and relevant to the school/board community. Examples include;
  - a. Good news items celebrating student success
  - b. Important dates, public meeting and event notifications
  - c. News on programming
  - d. Advisories as necessary during crisis situations
  - e. Education-related updates and links to resources
- Board and school social media accounts and websites will not include any advertisements, logo, testimonials or endorsements of any product or company except for official partnerships.
- Board and school social media accounts and websites may contain links to external sites providing that an appropriate disclaimer is clearly displayed.
- The individual designated as responsible for a particular social media account and website must ensure that there is adequate protection from unauthorized access and from manipulation and alteration of information that is posted to that specific account/website. Assistance can be obtained from the Information and Technology (IT) Department.

### **B. Personal Accounts/Sites**

- The District recognizes that some employees may maintain personal blogs or websites, and/of contribute posts to personal

blogs or personal websites or web pages of others and/or participate in social networking sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The District acknowledges that these can be excellent tools for professional development and two-way communication. However, employees may not communicate with students via these means. Additionally, employees who participate in social media must abide at all times with legal requirements including compliance with all privacy and information laws. Employees may be held accountable for publications on social media sites even if they are made to a limited group of “friends” or contacts and not generally accessible to the public.

**Employees must adhere to the following guidelines:**

- a. Teachers are required to uphold the Manitoba Teachers Society Ethical Standards of practice both in and out of the school, which extends to the digital realm.
- b. Social media usage by teachers is also guided by standards of professional conduct as per the Education Act, collective agreements and the Manitoba Teachers Society.
- c. Do not make or post disparaging, discriminatory, defamatory, confidential, threatening, libellous, obscene or slanderous comments about the District, its employees, students, or school community members.
- d. Do not post copyrighted information.
- e. Do not use the District or school logos or email addresses on personal social media sites.
- f. Ensure that your profile and related content (even if it's of a personal and not of an official nature) is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a professional appropriate with the public trust associated with your position. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in online social networks.
  - i. Do not use racial slurs, profanity, personal insults, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in your work place.

- ii. Do not endorse any commercial products, services or entities related to your work at the District. For example, if you are a custodian, do not endorse cleaning products; if you are a teacher, do not endorse learning programs.
  - iii. Do not post inappropriate photos or information of yourself online.
  - iv. Do not choose inappropriate avatar.
  - v. Do not link inappropriate content.
- g. District employees must include disclaimers on their personal blogs that their views are their own and don't reflect the position of the School District of Mystery Lake.

### **C. District Social Media Accounts / Sites**

#### a. Main District Website

- The School District of Mystery Lake will maintain a website
- The Superintendent(s), or designate, will be responsible for the suitability of content for the board website.
- The Director of Information and Technology will be designated the immediate responsibility for the management of the board website.
- Board staff will be responsible for web maintenance will work in consultation with groups within the board to manage and publish appropriate material on the board website.
- In addition to the main District website, the board may also establish corporate social media accounts.
- All District social media accounts will display the District logo.
- There may also be circumstances where District social media account should only be used to broadcast out information. In these situations account notifications tool settings should be set where at all possible.

- Through District social media account(s) the District may provide brief and timely updates on items such as, but not limited to the following:
  - i. Links to “good news” stories celebrating student success
  - ii. Public Meeting and event notifications
  - iii. News on important decisions and developments affecting the board
  - iv. School and bus cancelations
  - v. Links to Regular Meetings of the Board
  - vi. Links to media releases
  - vii. Advisories as necessary during crisis situations
  - viii. Education-related updates and links to resources
  - ix. Clarification of issues and instances of misinformation in the media
- The Public Relations Committee are responsible for the design and implementation of District/Board social media accounts.
- Usernames and passwords enabling access to District/Board social media accounts will be held by the PR Committee and Director of IT and other administrative staff as deemed necessary by the Superintendent(s).
- Ongoing maintenance, updating and monitoring is the responsibility of the PR Committee and/or designate.
- All requests for the posting of information on District social media accounts will be directed through the PR Committee, and when necessary, vetted through the Superintendents’ office. The PR Committee will proactively seek out items to post with a view to ensuring that social media accounts are updated regularly in order to maintain relevance and readership.

## **D. School and Board- Related Social Media Accounts/ Sites**

### a. Creating an Account / Site

- While the District cannot control nor be held responsible for external social media accounts/websites created by parents, students and community member's specific guidelines are necessary when it comes to the creation of school and board-related accounts by schools and school/board committees. This would include (but not limited to) social media accounts and websites (in addition to the minimum standard District \-hosted school website) created by schools, school councils, school/board programs and departments, and board committees.
- Those seeking to create school-based social media accounts/websites should direct their requests to the school principal for approval (in consultation with the Superintendent) and to ensure compliance with and understanding of SDML guidelines, policies/procedures and relevant legislation related to social media.
- Principals will have immediate responsibility for the content of school-related social media accounts/sites. The principal will determine who will be the school webmaster and who will be responsible for the content and the publication of the website and associated links. All usernames and passwords must be shared with the principal.
- Those seeking to create board-related social media accounts/websites must direct their requests to the PR Committee for approval and to ensure compliance with and understanding of District guidelines, policies/procedures and relevant legislation related to social media.
- PR Committee will over see board-related social media accounts/sites and assign responsibility for the content and monitoring, as appropriate. All usernames and passwords must be shared with the Superintendent(s).

- The principal or Superintendent may direct the requesting party to the Director of IT to ensure that any new social media application are positioned to consistently reinforce the values of the School District of Mystery Lake.
- There may be circumstances where a school or board-related social media account should only be used to broadcast out information. In these situations, account notification tool settings should be set (where at all possible) such that messages are only broadcast out and any replies received are not viewable by the general public.

### **E. Maintenance**

- Account administrators/webmasters will be designated by the school principal or Superintendent(s)
- Account administrators/webmasters are responsible for updating and monitoring their assigned accounts/sites, and will provide timeline update reports to their principal.
- In order to maintain relevance and readership, social media accounts should be updated regularly.