

Policy 5460: Electronic Resources and Social Networking

Status: ADOPTED

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The **Hot Springs** School District recognizes that an effective public education system develops students who are globally aware, civically engaged, and capable of managing their lives and careers. The District also believes that students need to be proficient users of information, media, and technology to succeed in a digital world.

Public school employees are held to a high standard of behavior. The Montana Department of Education *Professional Educators of Montana Code of Ethics* requires District staff to maintain a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom. The District encourages all staff to read and become familiar with the Code of Ethics.

The school district staff shall not socialize with students on social networking websites (during school or out-of-school) in a manner contrary to this policy. Staff are reminded that the same relationship, exchange, interaction, information, or behavior that would be unacceptable in a non-technological medium, is unacceptable when done through the use of technology. In fact, due to the vastly increased potential audience digital dissemination presents, extra caution must be exercised by staff to ensure they don't cross the line of acceptability.

Specifically, the following forms of technology-based interactivity or connectivity are expressly forbidden when used in a manner not related to the delivery of educational services or district operations. **(DISTRICT SELECT WHICH BULLETS ARE FORBIDDEN. IF AN ITEM IS PERMITTED IT CAN BE INCLUDED IN A SEPARATE PARAGRAPH)**

- Sharing personal landline or cell phone numbers with students for non-educational purposes;
- Text messaging students for non-educational purposes;
- Emailing students other than through and to school controlled and monitored accounts;
- Soliciting students as friends or contacts on social networking sites for non-educational purposes;
- Accepting the solicitation of students as friends or contacts on social networking sites for non-educational purposes;
- Creation of **non**-District-approved and sanctioned groups or pages on social networking sites that permit the broadcast of information without granting students access to staff member's personal information **student posting on social media networking sites MUST be approved by advisor**;
- Sharing with student's access information to personal websites or other media through which the staff member would share personal information and occurrences.

Accessing social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited, unless asked to do so by administration. Except in an emergency, staff shall not access social networking sites using district equipment or personal equipment, ~~including during breaks or preparation periods~~. All school district employees who participate in social networking websites, shall not post any school district data, documents, photographs, logos, or other district owned or created information on any website. Further, the posting of any private or confidential school district material on such websites is strictly prohibited.

The Board directs the Superintendent or his/her designee to create strong electronic educational systems that support innovative teaching and learning, to provide appropriate staff development opportunities and to develop procedures to support this policy.

Staff should contact the administration if they would like to establish an educational related social media presence.

Montana Code Annotated	Description
2-2-102	Definitions
2-2-103	Public Trust
2-2-104	Rules of Conduct
2-2-105	Ethical Requirements
2-2-121	Rules of Conduct

Cross References

Code	Description
5223	Personal Conduct