

Timberlane Regional School District	Policy Code: GBEBD
Adopted: 12-20-12	Page 1 of 2

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES

A. Introduction/Purpose

1. Social networking technology can serve as a powerful tool to enhance education, communication, and learning. This technology can provide both educational and professional benefits, including helping students to succeed in their educational and career endeavors.
2. The School Board is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders who utilize social networking technology for professional purposes, including staff and students, do so in a safe and responsible manner.
3. This policy establishes acceptable use guidelines regarding practices for social networking communication between school district staff, as well as social networking communication between staff and students.

B. Definition of Social Networking

Social networking is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social networking websites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, and Google+.

1. **Professional social networking** is a work-related social networking activity that is district or school based. (e.g., the School District establishing a Twitter account for community communication, or a teacher establishing a Moodle site for his/her class).
2. **Personal social networking** is a non work-related social networking activity (e.g., a staff member establishing a Facebook page or a Twitter account for his/her own personal use).

C. Social Networking Use

1. The School Board strongly discourages school district staff from socializing with students on personal social networking websites. Further, the School District disclaims all liability for any lawsuits, damages, or other actions resulting from said conduct;
2. All school district employees, faculty and staff shall not post any school district data, documents, photographs or other district owned or created information on any personal social networking website;
3. The posting of any private or confidential school district material on any social networking website is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to student education records that are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);

<p>Timberlane Regional School District</p>	<p>Policy Code: GBEED</p>
<p>Adopted: 12-20-12</p>	<p>Page 2 of 2</p>

4. School district employees are prohibited from engaging in conduct on any social networking website that violates the law, school board policies and procedures, or other school district standards of conduct. Employees who violate this policy may face discipline and/or termination, in line with other school board policies and/or collective bargaining agreements, if applicable;
5. Acceptable professional use of social networking websites include district provided resources including but not limited to, Moodle and Google Apps for Education, and comparable social networking websites that do not contain offensive or inappropriate textual and/or graphic material;
6. The use of any social networking website for professional purposes must be for educational use only, that directly supports classroom instruction, community communication, or other official district or school business;
7. School district staff shall not post electronic files of student photos and/or videos, etc. of students that they are prohibited from publishing, as previously requested by parents in writing to the school principal;
8. School district staff shall not require other staff members or students to disclose or furnish their credentials to any of their personal social networking website accounts. Doing so may violate their right of privacy.

D. Guidance Regarding Professional Social Networking

1. School district staff should treat professional social networking space and communication like a classroom and/or a professional workplace. The same standards expected in school district professional settings are expected on professional social networking websites;
2. School district staff should not use their personal email address for professional social networking activities. The professional social networking presence should utilize a professional email address and should be completely separate from any personal social networking presence maintained by the staff member;
3. School district staff should use privacy settings to control access to their professional social networking websites to ensure that professional social networking communications only reach their intended audience.