

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY EMPLOYEES

A. Generally

The Petersburg School Board recognizes the value of student, teacher, parent, and community interaction on social networking sites that are designed for specific educational purposes and tied directly to the division's curriculum and instruction. Collaboration, resource and information sharing, online tutoring, etc. can be facilitated by the careful use of educational networking tools and web pages, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, wikis, and other networking tools.

Certified or licensed employees may communicate through electronic media with current Petersburg students for educational purposes. All online communication via the Petersburg Public Schools network or in which an individual holds him/herself out as a Petersburg City Schools employee must be consistent with policies and regulations of the Petersburg school division.

B. Establishment of Social Networking Sites for Educational Purposes

An employee may establish one or more social networking sites to be used for educational purposes and communication. Any such site shall have a clear statement of purpose and outcomes for the use of the networking tool, and a code of conduct for all site participants. Employees establishing the site shall:

- Apply appropriate security settings,
- Allow only approved participants access,
- Be responsible for the site's content,
- Monitor the site for inappropriate content, and
- Post only information related to the site's purpose that is appropriate for viewing by students, parents and the community at large.

Employees are expected to read and understand all terms of service and privacy policies associated with the social networking sites they intend to use.

C. Employee Use of Personal Social Networking Sites

Employees shall make student internet safety, including the protection of students' personal information, a priority. The Petersburg Public Schools therefore does not recommend that any employee establish an online social networking relationship with currently enrolled students on his/her personal social networking sites.

For the protection and safety of both employees and students, employees should consider limiting internet contact and communication with such students to available school division-approved, work related social networking resources made available through the Petersburg school division's network.

In all use of personal social networking sites, employees should:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and your authority as a classroom teacher, administrator, or supervisor;
- Practice online reputation management by considering the personal, professional, and social impact of what you post;
- Establish appropriate privacy settings to limit access to personal information contained on your social networking site;
- Establish social networking relationships with caution and consider "unfriending" those who post inappropriate content that may be viewed on your social networking site;
- Refrain from inappropriate electronic communications with students;
- Recognize that students may not exercise good judgment and may use social media inappropriately;
- Avoid the appearance of impropriety;
- Refrain from posting negative information about students, fellow employees or the school division; and
- Refrain from uploading inappropriate content; exercise caution when posting links to other internet or social networking sites and consider ad-free sites for hosting videos to eliminate inadvertent access to inappropriate advertisement and content.

D. Consequences of Inappropriate Use of Social Networking

All employees are expected to know and to be responsible for observing federal and state laws as well as the School Board's policies and regulations in relation with their work activities. Accordingly, employee use of social networking found to be in violation of one or more of Petersburg's policies, regulations or procedures and/or in violation of any applicable state or federal law may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Adopted: 3/11/13

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70.2, 18.2-372, 18.2-374.1:1, 18.2-390

Children's Internet Protection Act (FCC Regulations)

Guidelines for the Prevention of Sexual Conduct and Abuse in Virginia Public Schools, Virginia Department of Education, March 24, 2011.

Cross Refs.: BF Board Policy Manual
 CH Policy Implementation
 EGAA Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials
 GAB/IIBEA Acceptable Computer System Use