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EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The District recognizes the prevalence of social media used for personal and educational purposes and acknowledges that its employees, volunteers and Board Members or anyone acting in a capacity representing the school have the right under the First Amendment to speak out on matters of public concern. However, the District also has the right to regulate the speech of employees in certain circumstances. Accordingly, it is essential that employees conduct themselves in such a way that their personal or educational use of social media does not adversely affect their position with the District.

The purpose of this policy is to establish protocols for the use of social media by staff and those persons working with students to outline expectations for its use regardless of whether access to any social media is through a District-owned computer. Social media includes social networking websites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, personal web pages or blogs, educational networking sites and electronic messaging.

Expectations for the use of personal social media

District staff and those working with students should:

- Remember the District recommends you refrain but will not prohibit a staff from accepting current students as “friends” on personal social networking sites.
- Be aware that people classified as “friends” have the ability to download and share your information with others.
- Remember that once something is posted to a social networking site it may remain available online even if you think it is removed and it may be far-reaching.
- Set and maintain social networking privacy settings at the most restrictive level.
- Not use a social networking site to discuss students or employees.
- Not post images that include students without parental permission.
- Remember that you accept responsibility for what others post to your site.

Expectations for use of educational networking sites

District staff must in the course of their duties:

- Notify your supervisor about the use of any educational network and discuss with your supervisor the need for notification to parents and other staff.
- Use District-supported networking tools when available
- Be aware that all online communications are stored and can be monitored
- Have a clear statement of purpose and outcomes for the use of the networking tool.
- Establish a code of conduct for all network participants.

- 40 • Not post images that include students without parental release forms on file.
- 41 • Pay close attention to the site's security settings and allow only approved
- 42 participants access to the site.

43 Expectations for all networking sites

44 District employees should:

- 45 a) Not submit or post confidential or protected information about the District, its
- 46 students, alumni or employees. You should assume that most information about a
- 47 student is protected from disclosure by federal law (the Family Educational Rights
- 48 and Privacy Act (FERPA). Disclosures of confidential or protected information may
- 49 result in liability for invasion of privacy or defamation.

- 50 b) Report, as required by law, any information found on a social networking site that
- 51 falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines.

- 52 c) Not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.
- 53 Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork,
- 54 copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or
- 55 characterizations.

- 56 d) Consider whether a particular posting puts your professional reputation and
- 57 effectiveness as a District employee at risk.

- 58 e) Be cautious of security risks when using applications that work with the social
- 59 networking site. (Examples of these sites are calendar programs and games.)

- 60 f) Run updated malware protection to avoid infections of spyware and adware that
- 61 social networking sites might place on your personal computer.

- 62 g) Be alert to the possibility of phishing scams that arrive by email or on your social
- 63 networking site.

- 64 h) Adhere to appropriate boundaries of behavior, language and topics with students
- 65 and minors who may be directly or indirectly engaged on your site
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- 67 i) Remember that you are as responsible for your conduct with students in cyberspace
- 68 as you would be standing face to face.
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ADOPTED: December 13, 2011