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SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

This policy covers all social media platforms and other collaborative sites, mobile phones, interpersonal sites such as photo sharing websites, publishing websites, audio/video websites, and other interactive platforms designed for users to collaborate.

The Britton-Hecla School District recognizes that school employees have the right under the First Amendment of the US Constitution to speak out on matters of public concern using any non-school medium, including the right to communicate with students on matters of public concern during non-duty time.

Employees may maintain professional social media sites and may invite and accept current District students as “friends” on such sites.

- If such a site is maintained, the employee will inform his/her supervisor of the site and will provide a link to the site.
- Professional social media sites include, but are not limited to, school-related sites and/or non-school professional sites such as club sports, religious groups, scouting groups, art or theatre groups, etc.

Employees may contact students by email, text or phone call for school-related matters and/or non-school professional matters only.

- Examples of school-related matters would include an extra-curricular advisor informing his/her participants of a change in plans, etc.
- Examples of non-school professional matters would include club sports, religious groups, scouting groups, art or theatre groups, etc.

Employees shall not invite or accept current District students, except for the employee’s relatives, into any **personal** social media site. If a staff member is contacted by a student, the staff member should not reply and immediately reject the invitation.

- Employees should keep the security setting high on these sites to prevent non-authorized persons from accessing the site.

Employees are prohibited from sharing any communication that engages in personal or sexual harassment, unfounded accusations, or remarks that would contribute to a hostile work or education environment (racial, sexual, religious, etc) as well as any behavior (provocative photographs, sexually explicit messages, posting items exhibiting or advocating illegal acts, etc) not in agreement with any official ethical standards for that class of employee.

Employees shall not use social media for personal activities during duty hours except for mobile phones which may be used for phone calls and/or text messages during non student contact time.

An employee who is responsible for a social media posting that fails to comply with the guidelines set forth in this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including termination, with said discipline following appropriate disciplines procedures for that class of employee. In addition, any employee whose non-school communication causes a substantial disruption to the education environment or interferes with another's rights may be subject, as permitted by law, to discipline up to and including termination, with said discipline following appropriate discipline procedures for that class of employee.

Legal Reference SDCL 22-24-55; PL 106-554

Adopted: 08/12/13

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