

EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Red River Charter Academy (RRCA) recognizes the use of social media as a preferred means of communication in today's society. *Social media* is defined as the interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media includes any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, websites and online forums. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest, Instagram and Flickr. Any official use of social media shall promote effective and efficient communication between RRCA and the community.

MANAGING SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

RRCA shall maintain central public social media accounts, designed to share general news and information with the local community, employees, students and their families. Programs, under the guidance of the Executive Director and administrative staff, may choose to maintain their own program-specific social media accounts.

Employees who manage or contribute to official RRCA social media accounts shall be expected to represent the school professionally, as ambassadors to the general community. Employees should post information that is useful and appropriate for public consumption. Additionally, employees should refrain from posting any personal or political viewpoints or derogatory language on RRCA social media accounts.

Employees shall be encouraged to maintain a positive and friendly tone on RRCA social media accounts.

Employees shall respect copyright and fair use guidelines when posting content on RRCA social media accounts. Photos of students may only be posted if they are appropriate under current parent media consent forms.

RRCA reserves the right to delete any comments with foul language, abusive information, or inappropriate information from RRCA social media accounts, and to block subscribers who are abusive to employees or other social media users.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Social media can be a powerful teaching tool that can add great value to classroom instruction. Teachers shall be encouraged to use social media tools when appropriate in advancing educational goals in the classroom.

Employees who are considering using social media in the classroom shall follow these guidelines:

1. The Executive Director shall be informed when creating social networks for classroom use.
2. Parents shall be informed of the social media tools being used, how their children are being contacted online, and the expectations for appropriate behavior.
3. Clear rules and expectations shall be established, as well as a code of conduct for all participants in order to create an atmosphere of respect, trust, and clear professional boundaries.
4. The rules and guidelines set by the social media site shall be followed.
5. The social media network shall be treated like a classroom. Employees shall closely monitor interactions between students and address inappropriate use immediately.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

These guidelines should serve as a reference tool for employees to guide decisions about use of social media. The decision to use social media tools brings a certain level of risk both personally and professionally, especially if social media is used without the appropriate level of discretion and intent.

RRCA respects an employee's participation in social media for personal use on personal time. If, however, employees choose to do so, employees shall adhere to the following guidelines:

1. All rules established by the social media provider, including age requirements, profile restrictions, etc., shall be followed.
2. Employees shall be aware that even with the most stringent privacy settings, photos, videos, messages and comments can make their way into the public domain. When posting online about school, students, families or RRCA, staff should remember that all comments and postings could be seen publicly. Private communication published online can easily become public. Caution must be used when posting any comment and/or images online that may reflect negatively on a person's professional image.
3. "Tagging" photos of other RRCA employees, volunteers, contractors or vendors without the prior permission of the individuals being tagged shall be prohibited.
4. Employees shall communicate with families and students only through RRCA-provided devices on RRCA systems.

- A. Employees should not “friend”, “follow” or otherwise interact with students from personal social media accounts.
 - B. Employees should avoid communicating with families regarding school or RRCA-related matters through personal social media accounts or websites.
 - C. Employees should avoid posting or disclosing confidential information, pictures or schoolwork on personal social media sites or websites. Employees should remember that any parental consents apply only to RRCA-sanctioned sites and profiles, not personal social media profiles.
 - D. Employees must report to the Executive Director, at the first opportunity available, any student-initiated communication that may be construed as inappropriate.
5. An employee who identifies himself/herself as an employee of RRCA on personal social media profiles shall be mindful that any content associated with his/her profile should be consistent with the mission and policies of RRCA. Otherwise, the employee’s use of social media interferes with the employee’s ability to effectively perform his/her responsibilities, and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS INVOLVING STUDENTS

Employees shall maintain professional relationships with students at all times, in accordance with policies *GAMIA*, *Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students*, and *GBRA*, *Employee Conduct*. All electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in RRCA shall be school-related, and within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities, unless otherwise authorized under RRCA policy.

MONITORING

RRCA personnel shall monitor online activities of employees who access the Internet using school technological resources. Additionally, the Executive Director or designee may periodically conduct public Internet searches to determine if an employee has engaged in conduct that violates this policy. Any employee who has been found by the Executive Director to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The Executive Director shall establish and communicate to employees guidelines that are

consistent with this policy.

Approved by executive committee: September 19, 2019

Adopted by full board: September 26, 2019

Ref: US Constitution, Amend. I; 47 USC 254(h)(5), *Children's Internet Protection Act*; 18 USC 2510-2522, *Electronic Communications Privacy Act*; 20 USC 1232g; 17 USC 101 et seq., *Copyrights*; 20 USC 6777, *Internet Safety*.