

Personnel

Social Media Acceptable Use Policy

The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of social media for its employees and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. However, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, when such use:

1. interferes with the work of the Board;
2. is used to harass coworkers or other members of the school community;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of The Academy employees;
5. disrupts the work of the Board;
6. harms the goodwill and reputation of The Academy in the community; or
7. violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board therefore adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board employees.

Definitions:

Social Media—includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Vimeo, Pinterest, YouTube, and Instagram.

The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees and The Woodstock Academy—includes all names, logos, buildings, graphics, images and entities under the authority of The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees and The Woodstock Academy.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board or The Woodstock Academy, its programs, or teams on personal social networking sites, unless the employee also states that the post is the personal communication of employee and that the views posted are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the Board or its Administration.
2. Employees must refrain from mentioning other Board employees or other members of the school community (e.g., parents or others) on personal social networking sites, without such individuals' express consent unless the employee is addressing an issue of public concern and the employee's speech falls under applicable constitutional protections pertaining to same.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" or "follow" a student or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. An employee may not use the logos or trademarks of The Woodstock Academy on their personal social media posts unless the employee receives prior written consent from the Head of School. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with The Woodstock Academy and any of its programs or teams.
5. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their personal social media posts; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Such posts can reflect poorly on the reputation of The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
6. Employees are individually responsible for their personal posts on social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.
7. Employees are required to comply with all Board policies and procedures including the acceptable use policy, with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on The Woodstock Academy property or using Academy equipment must comply with those policies and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.

8. The Board reserves the right to monitor all employee use of The Woodstock Academy computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices.
9. All posts on personal social media must comply with Board policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
10. An employee may not link a personal social media site or webpage to the Board's website or the websites of The Woodstock Academy and its programs or teams; or post The Woodstock Academy's material on a social media site or webpage without the written permission of his/her supervisor.
11. All Board policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.
12. If an employee seeks to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of The Woodstock Academy, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of The Woodstock Academy administration prior to setting up the site.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Rules Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by The Woodstock Academy

1. If an employee wishes to use social media, or allow the group they are advising to use social media, to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, or an official sports team, or a classroom, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - a. The employee must set-up all accounts related to the club/activity and maintain control of the password(s).
 - b. Members will not be established as "friends," but as members of the group list.
 - c. Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator, supervisor or coach). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - d. Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join.
 - e. Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - f. The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - g. The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - h. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such The Woodstock Academy-sponsored social media activity.
2. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their social media posts on The Woodstock Academy sponsored sites; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.
3. Employees are required to comply with all Board policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing The Woodstock Academy-sponsored social media sites.
4. The Board reserves the right to monitor all employee use of The Woodstock Academy computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication or post made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other data devices.
5. All posts on The Woodstock Academy sponsored social media must comply with Board policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
6. An employee may not link a Woodstock Academy sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the Board.
7. An employee may not use Woodstock Academy sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.

8. An employee may not use The Woodstock Academy sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board or of The Woodstock Academy or its programs, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
[53A-182B](#) Harassment in the first degree.
P.A. 98-142 An Act Requiring Notice to Employees of Electronic Monitoring by Employers.
United States Code, Title 20
675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
United States Code, Title 47
254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts

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The Woodstock Academy
Woodstock, Connecticut