

Social Media Guidelines – Approved March 23, 2016

Our social media guidelines are intended to ensure that we are mindful of our words to uphold our shared goal of representing South Whidbey School District ethically and with integrity. Online engagement is vital to create important two-way dialogues and grow awareness. Yet there is great “bleed” across personal and professional communications that must be considered and managed. As you interpret and apply these expectations please exercise sound judgment and common sense at all times to prevent social media postings from inadvertently harming South Whidbey Schools or its employees’ reputation or ability to do business.

Board member use of social media will be consistent with the Code of Ethics.

- Follow South Whidbey Board Code of Ethics at all times;
- Board members will not have online conversations that violate the Open Public Meetings Act;
- Board members may not use online websites to communicate with one another about official board business;
- Board members will exercise care not to disclose confidential information; and,
- Board members shall be aware that any comments on official business may create a “public record” and trigger the record retention requirements of the Public Records Act.
- Acknowledge diversity. Show respect for different points of view and be sensitive to issues of race, religion, sexual orientation, age and culture; how you conduct yourself in the online social media space is a public view of the culture and operations of SWSD.
- Fully disclose your role with South Whidbey School District. Keep the lines of communication clear. State your name, position, and title, whether you are a member of the Board.
- When in doubt, do not post. Anyone who posts on behalf of South Whidbey School District must account for their words and actions. Online posts must be completely accurate, in no way misleading, and take care never to reveal private or confidential information. Exercise sound judgment and common sense, and if there is any doubt, DO NOT POST IT.
- In any circumstance in which you are uncertain about how to respond to a post, send the link to the Superintendent and Board Chair.
- Give credit where credit is due. Never use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others absent necessary permissions.
- To ensure that South Whidbey School District Board speaks with one, collective voice, the Board Chair and Superintendent are the official spokespersons. Added permissions are case-specific — never global. That is, others may be designated to speak on behalf of South Whidbey School District based on their expertise with specific issues.
- Remember that local posts can have global significance. The way that you answer an online question might be accurate in some parts of the world, but inaccurate in others. Keep that “world view” in mind when you are participating in online conversations. Remember, the Internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if you remove/delete it later or attempt to make it anonymous.
- Never guess or speculate regarding district business. Be certain to cross-check every post to make sure that what you have written is based on fact, not opinion, and truly reflects the content you wish to convey.