PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

<u>Employee Use of Social Media Policy</u>

Pathways to College recognizes the value of teacher inquiry, investigation, and innovation using new technology tools to enhance the learning experience. PTC also recognizes its obligation to teach and ensure responsible and safe use of these technologies. Social media technology can serve as a powerful tool to enhance communication and learning. This technology can provide many benefits for communication, as well as preparing PTC students to succeed in their educational and career endeavors.

This policy addresses employees' use of publicly available social media networks including: personal Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media. PTC takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks for personal use on personal time. However, use of these media for personal use during PTC time or on PTC equipment is prohibited. In addition, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws or PTC policies.

PTC recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and e-learning tool. Toward that end, PTC provides password-protected social media tools and PTC-approved technologies for e-learning and encourages use of PTC tools for collaboration by employees. However, public social media networks, outside of those sponsored by PTC, may not be used for classroom instruction or PTC-sponsored activities without the prior authorization of the Superintendent or designee and parental consent for student participation on social networks. PTC may use these tools and other communication technologies in fulfilling its responsibility for effectively communicating with the general public.

The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. When employees choose to join or engage with PTC students, families or fellow employees in a social media context that exists outside those approved by PTC, they are advised to maintain their professionalism as PTC employees and have responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks, including requirements for mandated reporting. Employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws or PTC policies.

A. Definitions
1. **Social Media** includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. These websites not only provide

information, but allows for interaction during this informational exchange through user-generated content.

2. ***Public social media networks*** are defined to include: Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media generally available to the public or consumers and which do not fall within PTC's electronic technologies network (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, blog sites, etc.).

3. ***PTC approved password-protected social media tools*** are those that fall within PTC's electronic technologies network or which PTC has approved for educational use. PTC has greater authority and responsibility to protect minors from inappropriate content and can limit public access within this limited public forum.

4. ***Technology*** includes computers, notebooks, the Internet, telephones, cellular telephones, personal digital assistants, pagers, MP3 players, such as iPod's, USB drives, wireless access points (routers), or any wireless communication device.

5. ***School Technology*** is that which is owned or provided by the school.

6. ***Personal Technology*** is non-school technology.

B. Official School Social Media Presence

These guidelines are tailored primarily to social networking sites. Some examples include:

- Facebook (http://www.facebook.com)
- Flickr (http://www.flickr.com)
- Snapchat (http://www.snapchat.com)
- Instagram (http://www.instagram.com)
- Twitter (http://www.twitter.com)
- Vimeo (https://vimeo.com)
- YouTube (http://www.youtube.com)
- Blogs (Web Logs)
- Any school social media site

Social Media and Internet Use Guidelines On and Off Campus As set forth in PTC's Vision, all employees are expected to serve as positive ambassadors and to remember they are role models to students in this community. Because readers of social media networks may view the employee as a representative of PTC, PTC requires employees to observe the following rules when referring to the school, students, programs, activities, employees, volunteers and communities on any social media networks.

Respect your audience and your coworkers. Employees must be respectful and professional in all communications (by word, image or other means). Employees shall not use obscene, profane or vulgar language on any social media network or engage in communications or conduct that is harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory or that discusses or encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, or bullying. Be

sensitive about linking to content. Redirecting to another site may imply an endorsement of its content. Employees shall not engage in any form of communication which directly or indirectly references parents, students or other employees negatively.

Employees must make clear that any views expressed are the employee's alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of PTC. Employees may not act as a spokesperson for PTC or post comments as a representative of PTC, except as authorized by the Superintendent or designee when authorized as a spokesperson for PTC, employees must disclose their employment relationship with PTC.

Protect confidential information. Employees may not disclose information on any social media network that is confidential or proprietary to PTC, its students, or employees or that is protected by data privacy laws. Be thoughtful about what you publish. You must make sure you do not disclose or use confidential information. Students, parents, and colleagues should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval, this includes photographs or videos. For example, you must obtain prior written permission before posting student/co-workers picture on a social network (student photos require parental consent, they must not be on PTC do not publish list) or publishing a conversation that was meant to be private. PTC recommends that content owners request that a second person review all photographs prior to publication. One person may catch issues that the first set of eyes overlooked.

It is acceptable to discuss general details about class projects, lessons, or events and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for an individual (e.g., teacher, students, parents) so long as the information provided does not make it easy for someone to identify the individual or violate any privacy laws. Further, that references are not negative in nature. Public social networking sites are not the place to conduct PTC business with students or parents, please conduct these interactions using PTC network.

Employees may not post any private images of PTC premises and property, such as workrooms, offices, including floor plans.

Be transparent. Your honesty or dishonesty will be widely available on social media. If you are posting about your role at PTC, use your real name and identify your employment relationship. Be clear about your role; if you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out.

Perception can be reality. In online networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a PTC employee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about PTC by community members, parents, students, and the general public; and you are creating perceptions about yourself with your colleagues and managers. When posting online be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with PTC's beliefs, core values and professional standards.

Are you adding value? There are millions of words out there. The best way to get yours read is to write things that people will value. Communication associated with PTC should help fellow educators, parents,

students, and co-workers. It should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community. If it helps improve knowledge or skills, solve problems, or understand education better—then it's adding value.

Stay polite and keep your cool. One of the aims of social media is to create dialogue, and people will not always agree on an issue. When confronted with a difference of opinion, stay cool. If you make a mistake, be up front and correct it quickly. Express your points in a clear, logical way. Sometimes, it's best to ignore a comment and not give it credibility by acknowledging it with a response.

Ensure the safety of students. When employees, especially teachers/coaches/advisors, choose to join or engage with these social networking groups, they do so as an employee of PTC and have responsibility for monitoring content and addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks. This includes acting to protect the safety of minors online.

Staff Use of Personal Technology

Limit On-Duty Use. Staff members are encouraged to limit their personal technology use during duty hours. Use of Personal Technology for non-school business should be limited to off-duty time and designated breaks.

Work/Personal Distinction. Staff members are encouraged to maintain a clear distinction between their personal social media use and any school-related social media sites. You may consider setting up separate social media accounts for personal and professional use.

Personal Social Networking & Media Accounts. Before employees create or join an online social network, they should ask themselves whether they would be comfortable if a 'friend' decided to send the information to their students, the students' parents, or their supervisor. School employees must be mindful that any Internet information is ultimately accessible to the world.

Responsible Online Identity Monitoring. Employees are encouraged to monitor their 'online identity,' by performing search engine research on a routine basis in order to prevent their online profiles from being fraudulently compromised or simply to track information posted about them online.

Social Interaction with Students. Employees should not have online interactions with students on social networking sites outside of those forums dedicated to academic use. School employees' social networking profiles and personal blogs should not be linked to students' online profiles.

Contacting Students Off-Hours. – Employees should only contact students for educational purposes and must never disclose confidential information possessed by the employee by virtue of his or her employment.

Be a positive role model. Educational employees have a responsibility to maintain appropriate employee-student relationships, whether on or off duty. Both case law and public expectations hold educational employees to a higher standard of conduct than the general public.

Don't forget your day job. You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job. Remember that PTC technologies are provided for educational use. Use of social media for personal use during PTC time or on PTC equipment is strictly prohibited.

Be careful with personal information. Make full use of privacy settings. Know how to disable anonymous postings and use moderating tools on your social media site(s). Astute criminals can piece together information you provide on different sites and then use it to impersonate you or someone you know, or even reset your passwords. When setting up Social Media accounts do not use your PTC password for professional or private accounts create your own unique password. When setting up personal Social Media accounts employees shall not use their PTC email address for login purposes.

Staff Use of Technology For Educational Purposes

PTC recognizes that student groups or members of the public may create social media representing students or groups within PTC. Employees shall annually disclose to PTC the existence of and their participation in such networks.

A. Request Authorization

School presence on any social media site, including school-related accounts, such as clubs, teams, field trips, course, or other sites associated with the school must be authorized by the Superintendent or designee. Any sites, accounts, or pages existing absent prior authorization will be subject to review, editing, and removal. As appropriate, a recommendation for disciplinary action may result.

Foundations and Booster Sites - Authorized school foundation and booster websites shall maintain a clear separation from the school website. However, a link to and from the schools website and the school foundation or booster group website is permissible.

School Logo - The use of the PTC logo(s) on a social media site must be approved by the Board of Directors. If you're an employee contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media both on and off PTC network—these guidelines are for you.

General School Sites and Accounts - The school's general social media sites, including the school's blogs, Facebook and Twitter accounts, will be managed by the Administration. Duplicate, unofficial sites shall be reported and investigated.

Sponsors and Advertising - Sponsor logos are permissible on school-related websites, with the prior approval of the Board of Directors. The page must also include or link to contact information for an individual who can provide information about sponsorship. Advertising for third-party events or activities unassociated with official school business is strictly prohibited.

Content Disclaimer – Any approved official presence on social media sites outside of those created and monitored by PTC shall include the following text:

> "The views expressed on this site do not reflect the views of Pathways to College. This site contains user-created content which is not endorsed by Pathways to College. The purpose of this site is"…(then specify the purpose)

B. Maintenance and Monitoring Responsibilities

Content Copyright. Content must conform to all applicable state and federal laws, as well as all board policies and administrative procedures. Content must not violate copyright or intellectual property laws and the content owner must secure the expressed consent of all involved parties for the right to distribute or publish recordings, photos, images, video, text, slideshow presentations, artwork or any other materials.

Keep Content Current. Content must be kept current and accurate, refreshed regularly, following PTC Website Guidelines and Policies established by the Board of Directors.

Monitor comments and posts. All postings and comments by users are monitored and responded to as necessary on a regular basis. Postings and comments of an inappropriate nature or containing information unrelated to official or school business should be deleted promptly. Such postings shall be reported, investigated, and authors will be disciplined as appropriate.

If you would not bring it into the classroom, do not post it online!

We expect all who participate in social media to understand and follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could put you at risk. These guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge—check on a regular basis to ensure you are up to date.

It's your responsibility. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. If it seems inappropriate, use caution. If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't shrug it off and hit 'send.' Take time to review these guidelines, if you are questioning any content. If you're still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your supervisor. What you publish is accessible by many associated with PTC as well as the public and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Trademark, copyright, and fair use requirements must be respected.

An employee who is responsible for a social media network posting that fails to comply with the rules and guidelines set forth in this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or the content of anything posted on any social media network.

Anything posted on an employee's Web site or Web log or other Internet content for which the employee is responsible will be subject to all PTC policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines. Where applicable, employees may be asked to disclose to PTC the existence of and to provide PTC with access to an employee's Web site or Web log or other personal social media network as part of an employment selection, promotion, or disciplinary process.