



Social Media Guidelines

The Social Media Policy for the Hopewell Valley Regional School District

No longer are newsletters, calendar of events, e-mails and other one-way communication enough for schools. Great school communities inspire great conversations, inside the classroom and out! There is a need for two-way, real-time communication allowing for engaging conversations within the entire Hopewell Valley Regional School District community including students, parents, administration, and the residents and business of Hopewell Valley. As required by NJ Administrative Code, social media instruction is embedded within the K-12 instructional program.

First and foremost, students, staff and guests are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or online communications, both within the Hopewell Valley Regional School District and beyond. Those who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts reflect on the school community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, faculty and staff employee handbook and the HVRSD Guidelines for Responsible Computing (Acceptable Use Policy).

- To protect the privacy of Hopewell Valley Regional School District students and faculty, users may not, under any circumstances, create digital video recordings or photos of school staff and/or students for publication without permission.
- Users may not use social media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about community members, athletic or academic contest rivals, etc.
- Users who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not reflect poorly upon the school or school district.
- Be aware of what you post online. Social media venues including wikis, blogs, photo and video sharing sites, are very public. What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you wouldn't want friends, enemies, parents, teachers, or a future employer to see.
- Follow the school's code of conduct when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birthdates, and pictures. Students are not to share passwords with anyone besides teachers and parents.
- Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas is recommended. However, be sure to read the entire article prior to linking to ensure that all information is appropriate for a school setting.
- Do your own work! Do not use other people's intellectual property without their permission. It is a violation of copyright law to copy and paste other's thoughts. When paraphrasing another's idea(s) be sure to cite your source with the URL. It is good practice to hyperlink to your sources.
- Be aware that pictures may also be protected under copyright laws. Verify you have permission to use the image or if it is under Creative Commons attribution.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- Blog and wiki posts should be well written. Follow writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.
- If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, communicate this to the appropriate person or office (ie...teacher, administration, etc.).