

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Students have extensive access to social media. Social media offer a variety of positive experiences and benefits to students, including increased engagement in the community, increased sense of social connection and sense of well-being. They also harbor a number of known risks to students' privacy, future employment and current well-being. The risks include, but are not limited to: bullying, harassment, defamation and injury to reputation. Those risks are increased by the public nature and inherent insecurity of electronic digital communication.

The purpose of this policy is to promote, instill and support habits of communication and character that will help PCHS students be successful both in their progress toward completing their educational program and in their future lives.

Guidelines: Students are expected:

1. To be respectful, careful, responsible and accountable for their use of social media. A student's right to make a statement does not mean that the speech has no consequences in terms of impact on others, judgments made about the speaker by third parties, or the impact on future employers.
2. To respect the lack of privacy inherent in social media. For instance, communications intended to be private by their sender may be shared by their receiver and published widely.
3. To respect the abusive power inherent in social media.
 - **Example:** *An image, comment or video that a student intends to be funny may be published widely. That content may be disturbing or harmful to persons from other races, cultures or personal backgrounds due to the historical uses or abuses of images, words or concepts embedded in that content. Not only is it ethically wrong to hurt others if it can be avoided, but in the digital world the abuser may quickly become the recipient of threats, abuse and disparagement.*
4. To respect the speed inherent in modern social media.
 - **Example:** *A student may post a statement to a nonpublic account, have the statement photographed and uploaded to a public Facebook page and begin receiving abusive messages within minutes of posting the original statement.*
5. To be gracious and compassionate both in the statements they make and when they interpret the intentions of those making statements concerning them. Students should expect to be held responsible by others for what they say in all places, including on social media.

6. To represent themselves honestly and ethically online. It is unlawful to impersonate another person (student, staff, or any other person) for the purpose of causing harm or person gain.
7. To always behave lawfully and refrain from encouraging others to act unlawfully. Unlawful activities that can be conducted through social media includes (but is not limited to):
 - Threats
 - Drug Sale
 - Criminal Activity
 - Gang Activity and Communications
 - Cheating and Plagiarism
 - Forgery and Falsification
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Sexual Exploitation
 - Blackmail and Extortion
 - Prejudice and Hate Crimes
8. To restrict their access to age-appropriate, educational content when using District electronic devices or network resources. Accessing, producing, or posting inappropriate material may lead to serious consequences. The posting and sharing of sexually explicit images of minors (for example, sexting) is a serious crime and may constitute child abuse.
9. To be aware that all District employees are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and should information posted on social media suggest that a minor is being abused or involved in sexual exploitation, or of danger to him/herself or others District employees are required to report this information to the appropriate authorities.
10. To produce original work and not misrepresent the work of others as their own. Students must use materials covered by a copyright only with permission. File sharing software and sites that encourage the illegal downloading of media are forbidden.
11. To be familiar with and follow the guidelines and the provisions of this policy.

Administrator/Designee Responsibilities:

Administration will:

1. Distribute and communicate this Social Media Policy for Students to all employees.
2. Investigate reported incidents of employee or students' misconduct or violations

- of appropriate conduct.
3. Report inappropriate postings may warrant additional reporting to the appropriate reporting agency:
 - a. Threats (contact Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD), School Operations, and Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services),
 - b. Inappropriate or sexualized images of minors (contact law enforcement and LASPD),
 - c. Child pornography (contact law enforcement and LASPD Police),
 - d. Raise a reasonable suspicion of child abuse (contact Child Protective Services).
 4. Document inappropriate postings by taking and printing screen shots or downloading them for evidence. Evidence should be collected with the sole purpose of the investigative process and stored in a secured location. This evidence may be used in conference with the employee(s) or associated persons in question. **Caution:** Do not download or print images of minors or any content that may be considered pornographic images of children. Law enforcement will gather evidence of pornography, not a PCHS employee.
 5. The target of online harassment can request removal of objectionable postings by reporting the abuse to the Internet service provider or webmaster. Most social networking sites have the capacity to flag objectionable postings with “report abuse” button. The target should document the postings prior to their removal.
 6. Monitor and follow-up to ensure that the inappropriate online behavior has stopped.
 7. Support this policy by assisting schools and worksites via trainings, consultation, and distribution of resources.

Staff should:

1. Share responsibility for modeling appropriate behavior and creating an online environment where mutual respect, tolerance, civility, and acceptance among students and staff are promoted.
2. Discuss all aspects of the Social Media Policy for Students before using social media for instructional purposes.
3. Monitor online learning platforms used in instructional activities.
4. Encourage students to report violations of the Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy and the Social Media Policy for Students.
5. Provide instruction to ensure that students are educated about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response and how to interact with others on social networking platforms.
6. Report any complaints or incidents involving social media to their administrator.

Procedure:

The following are general procedures for the administrator/supervisor to respond to any complaints:

1. Secure campus/office safety by ensuring all school site protocols are being followed.
2. Assure involved parties that allegations and complaints are taken seriously.
3. Investigate.
4. Take action to stop the behavior.
5. Request a factual written statement from the involved parties, to include witnesses if available.
6. Consult with the Local District, Staff Relations and other offices, as appropriate.
7. Document actions taken.
8. Implement disciplinary action as needed.
9. If appropriate, the victim may file a criminal complaint with law enforcement.
10. Continue to monitor and address inappropriate behaviors.