

MEDICINE HAT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 76

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

TITLE: Social Media Guidelines: District	POLICY REFERENCE: 570 Cyber Space and Technology Use Protocol
PROCEDURE CODE: 570 P 004	

STAKEHOLDERS

Internal

The internal stakeholders for Medicine Hat Public School District's social media guidelines are the Communications Coordinator, Senior Administration, Human Resources, School Administration, and potentially the Board of Trustees.

External

External stakeholders are the schools and the parents of students within our District.

OVERVIEW

This document provides the guidelines for Medicine Hat School District No. 76 regarding the use of social media.

PURPOSE

The District understands students, parents and employees use technology to engage, communicate and connect with each other. As a District, we recognize that using social media will enable our teams, schools, teachers, and parents to develop stronger relationships with key stakeholders, and keep them informed in a timely manner. We acknowledge the freedom of opinion, discussion and sharing of information, and support interactions that reflect our vision. We also acknowledge the limitations that social media can have regarding privacy; the guidelines outlined below ensure we are respectful, responsible, accountable and professional in our use of social media.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Users shall not disclose personal, sensitive or confidential information without prior written consent. Professionalism, privacy, transparency or respect must not be compromised. This falls in line with the Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- A work-related email address must be used when creating social media accounts.
- The District will have a minimum of two designates responsible for content management of all social media accounts. Accounts will be monitored to ensure materials posted do not violate any District policies and procedures, and are updated regularly.
- All accounts are to be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner, and appropriate for an educational setting.

PROCEDURES

1. Social Media is intended to compliment the District and our schools' communications. A consistent approach to the look and roll out of content is important for all of our online presence. All posts will use "We" rather than "I" in communications.
2. Recommended updates for social media include, but are not limited to: calendar of events for the District (i.e. First Day of Classes, District Professional Development Days, Christmas Break); school activities that are for the general public (i.e. theatre shows, playoffs for sports teams, science fairs); items of educational or social interest; links to positive news stories; and good news or celebrations in regards to a school, students, staff or District.
3. All postings, including photos, are subject to applicable provincial legislation.
4. Comments or confidential information are not to be posted on District-approved accounts including anything related to legal matters, subjects deemed controversial, District policy/procedures, contractual matters or crisis situations.
5. The District Facebook account will include the following disclaimers on its page for purposes of transparency and accountability to our stakeholders:

Ensure all posts are respectful to our Medicine Hat Public School District community and are consistent with our policies. Individuals that do not follow the guidelines below will have their posts removed and/or be blocked from the District's Facebook page:

- Obscene, racial or disrespectful comments, posts and visuals are not allowed.
 - Comments that are abusive, hateful or intended to defame anyone or any organization are not permitted.
 - Message the account privately regarding personnel issues rather than using social media.
 - Medicine Hat School District No. 76 reserves the right to delete comments that are spam or advertising; are clearly off-topic or disruptive; advocate illegal activity; promote particular services, products, or political organizations; or violate board policies and/or administrative procedures. The comments and posts do not necessarily reflect the opinions and/or positions of the School Board.
6. Designate(s) responsible for the administration of social media accounts will endeavor to respond to public requests for information in a timely manner. Social media accounts are monitored during work hours only. If an emergency situation should arise within the District, exceptions will be made under approval of Senior Administration.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

In the event that a crisis should occur within the District, whether it is at the District office or at one of the schools (as per the tri-divisional "Emergency Protocols"), the following guidelines are in place to assist the communications department in providing insight to the occurrence on social media:

Social media will be monitored for questions that may be posed from concerned citizens. Those individuals will be advised to monitor our social media which will have full details on the circumstance when information is ready to be released.

NOTE: If the circumstance is occurring at a school, it should be noted that parents are advised through School Messenger.

When full details are released to the Communication Manager, a media release is prepared and posted on the District website. The social media communication will then advise the public of the situation and link to the website address with full details.

Proposed:
October 26, 2017

Approved: