

**MILLINOCKET SCHOOL BOARD POLICY
USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

The Board recognizes that social media platforms have become important means of communication with potential pedagogical value. The policy sets forth expectations for school employees when using social media for school-related and personal purposes. Employees are expected to preserve the integrity of the learning environment in their use of social media, and must maintain professional boundaries with students at all times.

“Social media” includes technology and/or Internet-based tool(s) for communicating or sharing information, opinions and ideas with others, including but not limited to websites, blogs, forums, social networking platforms, image sharing applications and news sites.

A. Approval Procedure

The building administrator or supervisor may consult with the Superintendent or others as appropriate in evaluating the request. The building administrator or supervisor may consult with the Superintendent or others as appropriate in evaluating the request.

A school employee who desires to use social media for school-related purposes shall submit a proposal and request for approval to their building administrator or supervisor. Proposals for the school-related use of social media should include an articulation educational purpose and be appropriate to the students’ age level(s) of understanding, and range(s) of knowledge. Use of social media with students is limited to grades seven or higher. Any student under 13 needs parent/guardian permission to access approved social media.

The building administrator or supervisor may request additional information prior to making a decision on a proposal, and may consult with the Superintendent or others as appropriate in evaluating the request. The building administrator or supervisor may take one of the following actions:

1. Approval;
2. Approval with required modifications;
3. Denial.

The decision of the building administrator or supervisor shall be in writing and the decision is final.

Any later modifications to a proposal that has been already approved must be approved prior to implementation. The building administrator or supervisor may withdraw their approval at any time for good reason, with appropriate notice to the employee.

Approved proposals for the school-related use of social media must be resubmitted annually by September 30 for review. If an employee discontinues their use of approved social media, the building administrator or supervisor must be notified.

B. Terms of Use

The school-related use of social media approved in accordance with this policy is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Content on approved social media shall at all times comply with the Millinocket School Department's policies, procedures and guidelines as well as with any applicable state and federal laws, including confidentiality laws.
2. The responsible school employee shall monitor any student use of the approved social media and shall remove content that violates the Millinocket School Department's policies, procedures or guidelines and/or state or federal laws. Any inappropriate use of approved social media shall be reported to the building administrator or supervisor.
3. The Millinocket School Department may monitor any approved social media for compliance with applicable Board policies/procedures, other school rules and laws.

C. Personal Use of Social Media

The Board understands that many school employees use social media for personal purposes outside of work. Employees must keep their professional social media presence separate from their personal social media. Employees shall not use work time, school unit technology or equipment, or their work-issued email address for personal use of social media.

School employees are prohibited from "friending" students or engaging in any other interactions with students on social media, outside of any school-approved activity, except as allowed by Board policy GBEB.

School employees are expected to exhibit professional decorum on social media and not engage in conduct that violates Board policies, procedures and guidelines; which adversely affects their capacity to serve as a role model for students; or which distracts from or disrupts the educational process or the operations of the schools.

Violations of this policy may result in the withdrawal of approval to utilize social media for school purposes and/or disciplinary action, depending on the circumstances of each case.

Cross Reference: IJND/IJND-R – School Website and Social Media
IJNDB/IJNBD-R – Student Use of School Issued Computers/Devices
GBEB – Staff Conduct with Students
GCSA-GCSA-R - Employee Use of School Issued Computers/Devices

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