LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY BULLETIN

TITLE:	Social Media Policy for Students	**ROUTING** All Employees All Locations
NUMBER:	BUL-6399.2	
ISSUER:	Frances Gipson, Ph.D. Chief Academic Officer Division of Instruction Sophia Mendoza, Director Instructional Technology Initiative	
DATE:	July 18, 2018	

POLICY: The Los Angeles Unified School District is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment for its students, employees and associated persons. The Los Angeles Unified School District encourages positive relationships between students, employees and associated persons. There is, however, a distinction between being supportive of students and the real or perceived breach of confidentiality or misconduct, especially online. Students are expected to follow all District policies, including *BUL–999.12, Responsible Use Policy (RUP) For District ComputerSystems*, *BUL–6231.0, Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support*, and *BUL–5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy (Student-to- Student and Student-to-Adult)* when using social media as a form of communication.

MAJOR CHANGES: This revision replaces BUL-6399.1, of the same title, dated August 10, 2017, to reflect updated guidelines and definitions regarding students' social media use.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bulletin is to provide policies and guidelines regarding student's social media use; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by students online; to prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information, and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All social media on a District device and on the District's Network is always subject to District policies. Social Media is more than just social networking - blogs, wikis and messaging services are also classified as social media. At all times, in and out of school, social media use on District devices is covered by the RUP and this bulletin.

BACKGROUND: The use of the Internet in schools and at home can have a major positive impact on a student's education. For example, participating online with an audience beyond the classroom provides an opportunity to engage with others and experience diverse perspectives. The use of the Internet

also presents certain risks, which can be reduced greatly when students learn how to participate safely and appropriately online.

Teaching students to be critical consumers and creators of online material will help them be better positioned for college and career success. Thus, when students are not aware of the implications of their social media behavior and engagement, it can influence their future, disrupt the learning environment and potentially affect other students, staff, and administrators. Social media systems are designed around gathering, storing, and sharing information about their users. Students need guidance on how to responsibly and productively participate online to begin establishing a positive digital footprint. As stated in BUL–5181.1, Policy Regarding Internet Safety for Students, all students who are provided access to the Internet must participate in an Internet safety education program. As social media use continues to grow, social media awareness and education is crucial to effectively navigating and productively participating in such online spaces.

GUIDELINES: **I. DEFINITIONS**

DEFINITIONS: Social media is comprised of online platforms where users engage one another and share information and ideas through text, video, or pictures. To be a responsible social media user, students shall understand the different types of social media available and ways to engage in safe and productive ways online. For more information about adolescents and social media, or applications and platforms, visit Common Sense Media.

The following terms provide a general overview of common social media tools, practices, and features:

Apps are applications used to post media and are accessed primarily through mobile devices. Apps can access the user's pictures, personal information, and GPS location.

Associated Persons includes, but is not limited to, parents, parent-elected leaders of school committees, representatives and volunteers, consultants, contracted employees, walk-on coaches, child care/enrichment program providers, vendors and after-school youth services providers.

Blogs are web logs or online journals where authors and users can post textual, audio, or video content, and where some permit others to post comments on their blogs. Some websites use blog tools and message forums to engage users.

Confidential data refers to District-related content such as (but not limited to) grade and exam information, attendance data and behavior incidents.

Cloud Computing, otherwise known as 'using the cloud,' requires an Internet connection and is the practice of accessing files across multiple devices over the Internet.

Digital Citizenship is the practice of critical engagement and respectful behavior online, which is demonstrated through the digital content a student posts.

Digital Footprint is determined/defined by an individual's choice of content to post and profiles made across multiple websites, apps, and other platforms.

Media Sharing Sites are websites where users post and share videos, audio files and/or photos as well as tag them to enable searchability. Examples include Instagram, YouTube, and Flicker.

Social Media, also referred to as social networking, is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share and view information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

Microblogs are online spaces that allow users to post blog entries of limited length or characters. Twitter is an example as well as other sites that invite users to post short status and location updates such as Facebook.

Tagging is the practice of identifying and assigning information to a digital artifact such as a website, blog post, photo, video, or article for the purpose of easy identification, organization, aggregation, and searching. Tagging helps users find content they are looking for through across online platforms.

Wikis are resources or documents edited collaboratively by a community of users with varying levels of editorial control by the website publisher.

II. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

District electronic devices are provided for educational purposes, including the use of social media. Approved social media is to be used at school for educational purposes only and under the direction of a teacher or school leader. Home use of social media on District or personal electronic devices is limited to only sites approved by the district's web filtering system. According to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule ("COPPA"), it is illegal for companies to collect user information and track the online usage of children under 13.

Therefore, the only appropriate social media for children 12 and under is designed specifically for that age group. (Refer to *BUL–999.12, Responsible Use Policy (RUP) For District Computer Systems*)

All existing policies and behavior guidelines that cover student conduct on the school premises and at school-related activities similarly apply to the

online environment in those same venues.

1. Students shall consider their behavior and engagement when communicating with others and sharing content in social media spaces. Students must be aware that any content or information shared privately through social media on electronic devices can still be viewed, accessed, and distributed by others—even their peers. When using District network and/or electronic devices, students should expect the District to be able to access, view, record, check, receive, monitor, track, and log any social media activity.

2. Students shall engage in privacy practices and respect the privacy of others. Students shall exercise good judgment when using the built-in camera and recording capabilities of electronic devices. Students must always obtain permission before taking pictures, recording video, or recording audio of any person. Permission must be obtained before posting such material online. Be aware that parent permission is required before posting material that includes any student under the age of 18. Remember that a signed Los Angeles Unified School District Parent/Guardian Publicity Authorization and Release is required to post any images or video of any student under 18on school property or at school-sponsored activities. When signing a Publicity Authorization and Release form, parents should receive explicit notification if such material will be posted on a social media platform.

3. Students shall not share confidential information about themselves or others. Sharing personal information about oneself, family, peers or other scan lead to safety and privacy concerns. Personal information includes (but is not limited to) one's full name, address, phone number, school, and birthday. (Refer to BUL–999.12, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy(RAUP) For District Computer Systems and BUL–2469, Pupil Records: Access, Confidentiality, and Notice of Educational Rights, August 25, 2017).

4. Students must represent themselves honestly and ethically online and are not to mislead others by impersonating another person (student, staff, or any other person). (Refer to BUL–999.12, Responsible Use Policy (RUP) For District Computer Systems).

5. Students should be aware that all District employees are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse, BUL-1347.3, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*, dated August 19, 2016. 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, BUL-1347.3, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*, dated August 19, 2016, and BUL-5799.0, *Threat Assessment and Management (Student-to-Student, Student-to-Adult),* dated July 16, 2012.

6. Students must 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. Refer to BUL-6231.0, *Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support,* dated February 14, 2014 and BUL-1347.3, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*, dated August 19, 2016.

7. Students must always behave lawfully and refrain from encouraging others to act unlawfully. Refer to BUL-6231.0, *Discipline Foundation Policy*: *School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support,* dated July 1, 2011 and BUL-5799.0, *Threat Assessment and Management,* dated July 16, 2011. 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. Students must take responsibility for helping to create a safe school environment on and offline by reporting bullying or hazing to a trusted District teacher or administrator. Students must refrain from participating or contributing to cyber bullying, which is bullying through digital means such as via text, image, video, message, website post, social media activity, or other form of communication sent by an electronic device. Refer *to* BUL-5212.2*, Bullying and Hazing Policy: Student-to-Student and Student-to- Adult*, dated November 26, 2014; and BUL-3349.1*, Sexual Harassment Policy (Student-to-*

Student, Adult-to-Student, and Student-to-Adult), dated August 6, 2014.

9. Students must 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. Refer to BUL-999.12, *Responsible Use Policy (RUP) For District Computer System*, dated November 27, 2017.

10. All District students are expected to:
    - Be familiar with and follow the guidelines and the provisions of this policy
    - Adhere to this Social Media Policy for Students

III. ADMINISTRATOR/DESIGNEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Administrator/Designee 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. Refer to BUL-999.12, *Responsible Use Policy (RUP) For District Computer Systems*, dated November 27, 2017 and BUL-5212.2, *Bullying and Hazing Policy (Student-to-Student and Student-to-Adult)*, dated November 26, 2014 and other related District policies.

3. Report inappropriate postings may warrant additional reporting to District Operations or Local District Operations and 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). Refer to the attached Behavior Intervention Matrix, BUL-5799.0, *Threat Assessment and management (Student-to-Student,*

Student-to-Adult), and BUL-1347.3, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*.

4. Document inappropriate postings by taking and printing screen shots or downloading them for evidence. Evidence should be collected with the permission of the site administrator for 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. **<u>Caution:</u> 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 District employee.

5. Document all critical incidents on the Incident System Tracking Accountability Report (iSTAR).

6. 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.

7. Monitor and follow-up to ensure that the inappropriate online behavior has stopped.

B. 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. See BUL-999.12, *Responsible Use Policy*, dated November 27, 2017.

    6. Report any complaints or incidents involving social media to the site administrator.

C. Local District Superintendents should:

    1. Communicate this Social Media Policy for Students to administrators, employees and associated persons.

    2. Designate administrators to ensure the implementation of this policy.

D. Instructional Technology Initiative/Division of Instruction staff should:

    1. Support this policy by assisting schools and worksites via trainings, consultation, and distribution of resources.

    2. Align this policy with related District initiatives.

IV. GENERAL PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

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

A. Secure campus/office safety by ensuring all school site protocols are being followed.

B. Assure involved parties that allegations and complaints are taken seriously.

C. Investigate.

D. Take action to stop the behavior.

E. Request a factual written statement from the involved parties, to include witnesses if available.

F. Consult with the Local District, Staff Relations and other offices, as appropriate.

G. Document actions taken.

H.   Implement disciplinary action as needed.

I.   If appropriate, the victim may file a criminal complaint with law enforcement.

J.   Continue to monitor and address inappropriate behaviors.

K.   If appropriate, complete the Incident System Tracking Accountability Report (iSTAR).

L.   Information about allegations of misconduct or investigations should be handled within the confines of the District's reporting procedures and investigative process. The District will not tolerate retaliation against anyone for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint investigation process.

If the allegation is against one's administrator or supervisor, that person's supervisor must respond to the complaint (see Attachment D, Workplace Violence Complaint Form).

AUTHORITY: This is a policy of the Superintendent of Schools.

RELATED RESOURCES: BUL-999.12, *Responsible Use Policy (RUP) District Computer Systems Usage*, dated November 27, 2017.

BUL-5212.2*, Bullying and Hazing Policy (Student-to- Student and Student-to-Adult*, dated November 26, 2014

BUL-5181.1, *Policy Regarding Internet Safety for Students*, dated May 1, 2012

BUL-6231.0, *Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support*, dated February 14, 2014

BUL-1347.3, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*, dated August 19, 2016

BUL-5688.2, *Social Media Policy for Employees and Associated Persons*, dated October 5, 2017

BUL-5799.0, *Threat Assessment and Management (Student-to-Student, Student-to-Adult),* dated July 16, 2012

BUL-6887, *Pupil Records: Access, Confidentiality, and Notice of Educational Rights*, dated August 25, 2017

BUL-3349.1, *Sexual Harassment Policy (Student-to-Student, Adult-to-Student, and Student-to-Adult),* dated August 6, 2014

ASSISTANCE: For assistance and information, please contact any of the following offices:

LAUSD Resources

To obtain approval to use District logos and general District communication - Communications Office (213) 241-6766

For assistance with threat assessment and mental health issues - Crisis Counseling and Intervention Service, School Mental Health (213) 241-2174 or (213) 214-3841

For assistance with bullying, cyber-bullying, conflict resolution, and diversity trainings - Human Relations, Diversity and Equity (213) 241-8719

For guidance with identifying and establishing appropriate educational websites and apps - Information Technology Division (213) 214-5200

For any law enforcement matters - Los Angeles School Police Department (213) 625-6631

For assistance/consultation regarding legal issues - Office of General Counsel (213) 241-6601

For guidance in school operations and procedures concerning students and employees - District Operations Division (213) 241-5337

Employee Code of Ethics, LAUSD Ethics Office, dated July 8, 2014

Los Angeles Unified School District Board Resolution, Respectful Treatment of All Persons, passed October 10, 1988, last modified on July 8, 2014

For further information regarding IT Security, please contact Joe Oliver Director, Office of Information Technology Division at (213) 241-1362

For further information regarding IT Security, please contact Soheli Katal IT Administrator, Office of Information Technology Division at (213) 241-5200.

For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact Sophia Mendoza, Director, Instructional Technology Initiative at (213) 241-5532