



SECTION

IV

Technology Usage

Computers, networks, and online communications and information systems such as the Internet and e-mail are becoming more commonplace in our classrooms and media centers every year. Digital Curriculum and Resources for students provided by SBBC are becoming commonplace via the Broward Enterprise Education Portal (BEEP) and accessible via the Internet. While these systems deliver a huge number of resources to our classrooms, their ability to serve students and teachers depends on the responsible and ethical use of every device and system.

Use of the school district's technology and/or software for any unauthorized purpose is prohibited. This includes the unauthorized use of a computer/technology, including, but not limited to, accessing or breaking into restricted accounts or networks, creating, modifying or destroying files/records without permission, copying software, entering, distributing or printing unauthorized files/records, uploading to the Internet and/or sharing or distributing, offensive or inappropriate material, including video, and any other misuse or violation of the School Board of Broward County Technology-Acceptable Use Policy 5306, Section 6.

## Rights

Students have a right to use appropriate online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks to increase their access to information and resources.

Students have a right to use appropriate online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks to obtain information, create intellectual products, collaborate and communicate for educational purposes.

Students have a right to use appropriate online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks without the fear that their products or their personal reputation will be violated, misrepresented, tampered with, destroyed, or stolen.

## Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to understand the difference between appropriate and unacceptable uses of online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks.

Students have a responsibility to use online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with their educational mission.

Students have a responsibility to recognize that the use of online communications and information systems, the Internet and networks is a privilege that can be withdrawn if they engage in unacceptable or illegal use of this resource.

## Rule

**Students are expected to use technology responsibly.** SB Policy 5306 defines the appropriate use of technology throughout the District. This policy describes how computers and networks must be used to support research and instructional activities in our classrooms, labs, and media centers. It also includes the use of the digital resources provided by SBBC and made available through the Broward Education Enterprise Portal (BEEP) for students. First, it promotes the use of technology as a powerful educational tool that is increasingly becoming a common part of every student's day. Second, it provides those students who use these computers, and the networks to which they are connected, to act in accordance with prescribed rules and behavioral codes detailed in the policy. Several major provisions are noted below. The full text of SB Policy 5306 is available upon request from each school's media center and on the School Board web site. You may view the complete technology policy and all School Board policies on the Web at: [www.Broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies](http://www.Broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies).

## Major Policy Provisions

- Use of computers, networks, the Internet and online communication and information systems must be related to students' educational activities
- Students must recognize that computers, networks, and equipment used to support online learning are shared devices and agree to use

them in ways which will maintain their continued operability for all users

- No illegal activity may be conducted using the District’s computers, networks, or online communication and information systems
- Students must not access or distribute offensive, obscene, inflammatory, or pornographic materials, or participate in “sexting” (see Section II for the definition)
- Students shall not intentionally spread, or attempt to spread computer viruses, vandalize data, infiltrate systems, or degrade/disrupt computer and/or network performance
- All users of computers, networks, and online communications and information systems shall adhere to laws regarding copyright

## **FCAT Administration Policy**

- It is unlawful for anyone knowingly and willfully to violate test security rules adopted by the State Board of Education for mandatory tests, such as FCAT, and knowingly and willfully fail to follow test administration directions specified in the test administration manuals (F.S. 1008.24)
- The FCAT Administration Manual states:  
“During FCAT testing, possession of any electronic device that reproduces, transmits, calculates, or records is cause for invalidation. “Possession” is defined as “within arm’s reach,” even if the electronic device is not visible. For example, students [shall] not have cellular phones in their pockets, clipped to their belts, at their desks, or anywhere they can be easily accessed during testing.”
- Schools will direct students on the appropriate storage of electronic devices during testing
- It is strongly advised that you do not bring a cell phone or any other prohibited electronic device to any testing environment including but not limited to: Advanced Placement exams, PSAT or International Baccalaureate. If your electronic device makes any noise, or you are seen using it at any time – including breaks – you may be dismissed immediately, your scores may be canceled, and the device may be confiscated

*Illegally using school district technology and/or software to alter information is a felony. Misusing school district technology and/or software to transmit insulting, profane, racially or sexually offensive written language, or to make obscene remarks or gestures is unacceptable behavior that will lead to disciplinary action. Using technology including, but not limited to, computers, networks, online telecommunication systems, cellular telephones, and camera telephones to bully, extort, or libel another student or staff member is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and will result in disciplinary action.*



# Broward County Public Schools Social Media Use Guidelines

Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) realizes that part of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. As such, educational standards are now requiring the use of online educational tools to demonstrate proficiency. To address related issues, BCPS has developed the following guidelines to provide direction for employees, students and the school district community when participating in online social media activities.

Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies that enable all Broward County Public Schools' internal and external stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and form virtual communities via the computer and/or Internet. For some, social media is used mainly for social purposes, but for others, these sites and technologies are used as tools to teach and to connect with the community.

The First Amendment, in general, protects the rights of individuals to participate in social media. However, the laws and courts have ruled that schools can discipline students and staff if their speech, including online postings, disrupts school operations or constitutes a violation of federal or state laws or School Board policies. The BCPS social media guidelines allow employees to participate in online social activities. However, when participating it is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability; keeping in mind that information produced by BCPS staff and students is a reflection on the entire district and is subject to the District's School and District Technology Usage (Policy 5306), Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), Federal and State Statutes, Educator Code of Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, and other related applicable policies and guidelines.

By utilizing social media staff, students and parents agree to abide by these guidelines. Please read them carefully before using, posting, or commenting on any social media sites. It is important to remember that parents and guardians play a critical role in supporting and reinforcing these objectives.

## General Etiquette for Social Media

- **Be Honest/Truthful:** Always be transparent about who you are and who you represent. How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- **Maintain confidentiality:** Do not post any confidential or proprietary information in regards to yourself and/or others. Students can reveal some information about themselves (ethnicity, political beliefs, stance on issues, interests) but should not offer any confidential information (place of residence, phone number, discretely identifiable information, common 'hang-out' locations).
- **Know You Are Always "On":** You must assume that your social media usage is visible to the world. Be sure to manage what and with whom you are sharing. Keep in mind that while we all have occasional frustrations, social media are not the best venues in which to air frustration as those comments are available to everyone.
- **Be Respectful:** Avoid remarks that are off topic or offensive. Always demonstrate respect for others' points of view, even when they're not offering the same in return. Never bully, pick fights, and do not respond to abusive comments. If you are sharing a negative experience, please try to do so in a constructive way.
- **Think Ahead:** Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy and the privacy of others, and confidential or personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time so consider the content and consequences carefully. Show good judgment as future employment and/or academic opportunities may be adversely affected by your comments.
- **The Internet is not anonymous, nor does it forget:** Everything written on the Web can be easily traced back to its author. Information is backed up often and repeatedly, and posts in one forum are usually replicated in others through trackbacks and reposts or references.
- **Avoid "hazardous" materials:** Do not post or link to any materials that are inflammatory, defamatory, harassing or indecent.
- **Your online behavior should reflect honesty, respect, and consideration.**
- **When bringing your own technology to work make sure that you follow the guidelines set out in the BCPS Personally Owned Device Guidelines.**

## Faculty and Staff Guidelines

- Personal information of the employees and other individuals associated with the services that we are delivering to our students and staff must not be shared on or disclosed through social media. When contributing online, do not post confidential student or employee information. No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on social media sites. No student identifiable information, as defined in FERPA, can be posted on social media sites.
- As part of Policy 5306, faculty and staff are prohibited from using student photographs on personal social media sites, and can only use them on District approved social media sites in accordance with Board policies and applicable laws.
- BCPS employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish could be public indefinitely and may be subject to Florida Statutes including the Florida Public Records Law and the Educator Code of Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida. Failure to adhere to these principles and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action.
- It is recommended that BCPS employees include disclaimers within their personal social media sites that the views posted are their own and not those of BCPS.
- Teachers should monitor content contributed by students to school sponsored social media and must contact the Legal Department if and when First Amendment issues arise.
- Teachers should communicate with parents regarding involvement of their child in any project using online social media sites, applications and services, i.e., blogs, wikis, podcast, etc.
- Remember that school sponsored social media sites are an extension of your classroom and workplace. What is inappropriate in your classroom or workplace will be deemed inappropriate online.
- Respect the intellectual property of others, copyright laws, and fair use guidelines. Be sure not to plagiarize and be sure to give credit where it is due.
- When uploading digital pictures or avatars in school sponsored social media that represent yourself, make sure you select a school appropriate image. Also, remember not to utilize images protected by law.
- All postings on social media that are created as part of the official business of BCPS are subject to the Florida Records Retention Schedules and must be retained for the applicable period of time.

## Student Guidelines

- 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 will be inappropriate online.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birthdates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teachers and parents.
- Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas is recommended when appropriate. 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, images, designs, etc. 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 that you have permission to use the image or that 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, tell your teacher right away.
- Students who do not abide by these guidelines may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or access to future use of BCPS online tools. In addition, disciplinary or legal action may apply.

## Parent Guidelines

- Parents should expect communication from teachers regarding their child's involvement in any project using online social media applications, i.e., blogs, wikis, podcast, etc.
- Parents will not attempt to destroy or harm any information online. Instead they will report objectionable material to a school administrator.
- Parents will not use classroom social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
- Parents are highly encouraged to be aware of their child's electronic communications and participation in social media projects.
- Parent participation is encouraged to help ensure that student involvement in social media networking is appropriate and that the privacy concerns are protected.

Referenced from: [SocialMediaGuidelines.pbworks.com](http://SocialMediaGuidelines.pbworks.com)

## Reference List of District Documents:

School Board Policy 5306: School and District Technology Use

TINKER Rule: Ruling states that school officials may not silence student expression just because they dislike it. They must reasonably forecast, based on evidence and not on an "undifferentiated fear or apprehension of disturbance," that the student expression would lead to either (a) a substantial disruption of the school environment, or (b) an invasion of the rights of others.

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

Children's Online Privacy Protection (COPPA)

Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act

School Board Policy 5.9: Anti-Bullying Policy

School Board Policy 6000.1: Pupil Progression

Code of Student Conduct (in District Discipline Matrix)

Teacher Professional Standards

Education Code of Ethics

Web publishing guidelines

National Education Technology Standards for Students and Teachers

School Board Policy 6318: Copyright

School Board Policy 4212: Intellectual Property