3.25.95 SOCIAL NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose

First Philadelphia recognizes that many individuals, including students, have embraced social networking and social media as a fun and rewarding way to share one's life and opinions with family, friends and fellow students. "Social media" means any form of online posting, publication or presence that allows end users to engage in multi-directional conversations. Social media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, wikis, Second Life, social bookmarking, document sharing and email.

Engaging in such activity, however, carries with it certain risks and/or responsibilities – even though performed away from school or using a computer or other device that was neither supplied by the school nor connected to the school network.

Although First Philadelphia's regulation of student activities is generally confined to the boundaries of the school, while school is in session or during a school-based or school-sponsored activity, students and their parents/guardians must nevertheless be aware that inappropriate behavior at student activities can and will be given consequences by school staff, if warranted, even though the conduct occurred off school premises, not on school-time, through the use of a personally-owned computer or other device, and/or on a non-school-owned or operated Internet or social networking site.
The purposes of this policy is to provide clarity regarding prohibited use of social networking and social media which may be subject to punishment up to, and including expulsion, and to provide students and their parents/guardians with general guidelines for using social media.

Prohibited Use of Social Networking and Social Media

1. At no time during school or upon school premises, whether using school computer equipment or a personal computing device brought to school, may students access any social networking site unless specifically authorized to do so by the student's teacher for a legitimate educational purpose.

2. Unless specifically authorized by the administration, no student may represent himself or herself as a spokesperson for or on behalf of the school.

3. No electronic communication between any student and any teacher is allowed through any social networking site. Allowable electronic contact between students and teachers shall be confined to email on the school's network, and only for a legitimate educational or school-business purpose.

4. Just as the school does not tolerate bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, harassment, obscene *or derogatory language, etc., The school also will not*

tolerate any student's misuse of social media -- regardless of the location of the conduct, or occurrence after school hours -- if the conduct threatens another school community member, amounts to bullying and/or harassment, or otherwise substantially disrupts the school or adversely affects another member of our Caring School Community. The School thus prohibits and may legitimately regulate and punish off-campus behavior (including misuse of social networking or social media) that creates a foreseeable risk of reaching school property or impacting the school environment and which causes a material and substantial disruption or interference with the school's work, operation or discipline, or substantially collides with or invades the rights of others to be secure and to be let alone.

Accountability

The potential sanction for a violation of First Philadelphia's Social Networking and Social Media Policy is dependent upon the nature of the posting and the severity of the offense. If the posting constitutes a serious offense such as, but not limited to, bullying or cyber-bullying, harassing or intimidating any member of the school community, or threatening students or school personnel with assault then the appropriate consequence may be imposed, including long-term out-of-school suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

General Guidelines for Students Using Media and Social Networking

- Consult the Family Guidebook. Be aware that all existing policies and behavior guidelines extend to school-related activities in the online environment as well as on school premises.

- Be respectful. Remember that you are a member of a "Caring School Community" with responsibility for behaving in a manner that helps promote a school environment that is caring, nurturing, safe, orderly, and conducive to learning and personal and social development. Students are a diverse group of people with many different backgrounds, customs, viewpoints and beliefs. Communications which are pornographic, racist, threatening or bullying are never appropriate. Broad generalizations ("all teachers ..."; "all Students ...") are almost never accurate.

- Be reflective. Think before you post online. If you are upset or angry, take time to cool down. Read, then Reply. Do not skim statements and respond. Try to understand the thoughts of another before you comment on them.

- Exercise good judgment. Think about the type of image that you want to convey when posting to social networks and social media sites. How you represent yourself online should be comparable to how you wish to present yourself to others, consistent with the purpose and mission of the school.

- Be transparent. Do not misrepresent who you are. Never assume another's identity.

- Be cautious how you set up your profile, bio, avatar, etc. The same guidelines apply to this information as well as the substantive content you post. Do not post on blogs, wikis or other social media any identifying personal information such as full names, addresses or phone numbers.

- Keep confidences. Respect the power of public media, and do not violate the privacy of others. Social media may seem private, but it is highly public and durable. What you post will be viewed and archived permanently online once you hit the "publish" button.

- Do not threaten, harass or bully others using social media. You are responsible for your statements and can be held personally accountable by the school and subjected to discipline under its Code of Conduct, as well as criminally or civilly liable for your statements.

- Use appropriate language. Threatening, derogatory, obscene, insulting, inflammatory or bullying language is never appropriate.

- Be factual. Add to the information available to others, and provide value. Think about what you have to offer, whether it is thoughtful, relevant and based in fact. Do not Spam. Meaningless messages, mass messages or repetitive messages are not appropriate.

- Do not plagiarize. Do not copy the work of others. Follow copyright law. Whenever quoting or relying on another's work, give proper citation to your source. Develop and write your own thoughts.

- Be aware that photographs taken by professional photographers cannot be scanned and used on the Internet without the photographer's permission -- even if they are photos of you and for which you paid. It is not uncommon for photographers to seek compensation for "digital rights" to photos. When uploading digital pictures or avatars that represent yourself, be sure you select a school- appropriate image. Do not utilize protected images.

- Accept responsibility. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly. If someone correctly points out that you made a mistake, own up to it. Apologize, if an apology is owed.

- Write well. When posting to social networking or other social media sites, your comments convey a public image of you. Therefore, express yourself effectively. Use proper grammar, capitalization and punctuation. Check spelling, avoid slang and excessive abbreviations.

- Be wise. People often share too much information electronically. Those who reveal the names of their pets, parents, or other details may give hackers the clues to passwords. Information about planned vacations can be used by burglars. Think about how information can be used and misused.

- Do not hack. Never access someone else's identity or account, or restricted sources of information.
- Contact someone immediately, such as your parents, School Administration or the police, if you are threatened, harassed or bullied.

Guidelines for an Online Presence

- Exercise good judgment. Think about the type of image that you want to convey when posting to social networks and social media sites. How you represent yourself online should be comparable to how you wish to present yourself to others, consistent with the purpose and mission of the school.
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- Be cautious how you set up your profile, bio, avatar, etc. The same guidelines apply to this information as well as the substantive content you post. Do not post on blogs, wikis or other social media any identifying personal information such as full names, addresses or phone numbers.
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General Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

- **Discourage rumors.** Do not rely upon or pass on unsubstantiated information or gossip. If information seems unlikely or inflammatory, when in doubt, go directly to the source.

- **Respect confidentiality**. Many issues involving other families and students, or personnel issues, are legitimately confidential.

- **Raise and debate issues constructively**. Schools often face legitimate controversies. The school respects and solicits parent/guardian voices in addressing such issues. You are invited and encouraged to raise your concerns with the school's Administration and/or through attending an open meeting of the Board of Trustees and participating in the "public comment" session of the meeting.