

Mississinewa Community Schools

Use of Electronic Media

Employee Use of Corporation-Owned Computers and Networks

As role models for the corporation's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as corporation employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action. If any employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

The Corporation email and Internet systems are owned by the Corporation and are intended to be used for educational purposes only. While occasional personal use is allowed, employees should have no expectation of privacy when using the electronic mail or Internet systems for any purpose.

Users of Corporation email and Internet systems are responsible for their appropriate use. All illegal and improper uses of the email and Internet system, including but not limited to extreme network etiquette violations including mail that degrades or demeans other individuals, pornography, obscenity, harassment, solicitation, gambling, and violating copyright or intellectual property rights, are prohibited. Abuse of the email or Internet systems through excessive personal use, or use in violation of the law or Corporation policies, will result in disciplinary action.

The Corporation retains the right to access stored records in cases where there is reasonable cause to expect wrongdoing or misuse of the system and to review, store, and disclose all information sent over the Corporation email systems for any legally permissible reason, including but not limited to determining whether the information is a public record, whether it contains information discoverable in litigation, and to access Corporation information in the employee's absence.

Employee Use of Social Networking Sites Both On and Off-Campus

Accessing social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited, unless asked to do so by administration. Except in an emergency situation, staff shall not access social networking sites using corporation equipment or personal equipment, including during breaks or preparation periods. All school corporation employees who participate in social networking websites shall not post any school corporation data, documents, photographs, logos, or other corporation owned or created information on any website. Further, the posting of any private or confidential school corporation material on such websites is strictly prohibited.

What, in other mediums of expression, could remain private opinions, when expressed by staff on a social networking website, have the potential to be disseminated far beyond the speaker's desire or

intention, and could undermine the public perception of fitness of the individual to educate students, and thus undermine teaching effectiveness.

All employees, faculty and staff who participate in social networking websites shall not post any data, documents, photos or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity or interfere with the educational purpose and process.

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world. The reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar Internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.
 - a. Teachers may not list current students as “friends” on networking sites.
 - b. All e-contacts with students must be through the district’s computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
 - c. All contact and messages by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the athletic director and the school principal.
 - d. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
 - e. Inappropriate contact via email or phone is prohibited.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
5. Employees, faculty and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students.
6. The employee shall not use the corporation’s logo or other copyrighted material of the corporation without express, written consent.
7. The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, and administrative regulations, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus.

These restrictions include:

- a. Confidentiality of student records.
- b. Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- c. Confidentiality of corporation records.
- d. Copyright law.
- e. Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

8. The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
9. Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.
10. Always maintain professional standards. Absolutely never use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory—such as politics and religion.
11. Be thoughtful about everything published online. If you are angry or frustrated, it is best to avoid using online communications.
12. When speaking about other districts or teachers at other districts, be careful about identifying them if the remark may be interpreted as being critical of them. You must make sure that what you say is factual and that it does not disparage others.