



## Purpose

Portage la Prairie School Division believes that staff should observe the principles of integrity, professionalism, privacy, and impartiality when using social media. All employees must respect the strict confidentiality of all privileged information received in the conduct of school or division business.

For purposes of this administrative procedure, social media should be broadly understood to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others.

## Guidelines

1. When PLPSD employees communicate on behalf of the school or school division, they must always disclose their name and role.
2. As with all communication, when using social media, Portage la Prairie School Division employees must do so responsibly, including acknowledging that the opinions expressed are those of the individual, not of the school or school division.
  - A disclaimer should be used, such as: "The postings on this site are my own and may not represent the school or division's positions, strategies, or opinions."
3. All employees shall:
  - be aware of the effect their actions may have on their image, as well as the school and division's image. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.
  - be aware that the division may observe content and information made available by staff through social media. Staff should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the school, division, its employees, or students. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or can create a hostile work and learning environment.
  - do not publish, post, or release any information considered confidential or not public. If employees have questions about what is considered confidential, they should check with their immediate supervisor.

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4. Social media networks, blogs, and other types of online content sometimes generate press attention or legal questions. Employees shall refer these inquiries to authorized PLPSD spokespersons, such as the Superintendent/CEO or the Board Chair.

**Employee’s response to social media**

5. If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens them or becomes antagonistic, they should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of their immediate supervisor.
6. Employees should get appropriate permission before they refer to or post images of current or former employees, students, parents, vendors, or suppliers. Additionally, employees should get appropriate permission to use a third party’s copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks, or other intellectual property.
7. If employees post inaccurate information, it is to be corrected immediately. Employees should contact their immediate supervisor immediately and indicate the steps taken to remedy the situation.

Subject to applicable law, online activity that violates the expectations of this administrative procedure and/or violates the privacy of other individuals may be subject to disciplinary action and/or legal action by those individuals who may have been targeted through the social media posting.

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