DeKalb County School District™

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

www.dekalbschoolsga.org/communications

DeKalb County School District | Communications

The digital age has transformed how people communicate, learn and live since the beginning of the 21st century. The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) is preparing 21st century leaders to succeed in an ever-changing global society through classroom instruction and experiential learning. Social media and digital communication are key components to everyday life that must be understood and used correctly.

Our Digital Dreamers comprehensive technology program illustrates DCSD's commitment to increasing students' technological footprint and bridging the digital divide.

These Social Media Guidelines provide information about how to safely and responsibly use social media at school, at home and on-the-go. The information will include recommendations for appropriate social media communication, ideas on how to create a healthy digital image and procedures for protecting yourself and your privacy online. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the DeKalb County Board of Education's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

If you have feedback about these guidelines, please email communications@dekalbschoolsga.org with the subject "Social Media Guidelines Feedback".

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

In the digital world, what you post online can define who you are. Being a good digital citizen means positively contributing to the digital space, respecting other people's views weven if you don't agree and reporting issues that disrupt a positive digital environment.

Your digital footprint or reputation is left online when you post on blogs, upload videos and pictures or even leaving comments on websites. No matter what your online actions are, consider that what you share can leave a permanent record even if you click delete. Therefore, be extra careful about what you share online and with who you share content.

The DCSD Digital Dreamers program and 1:1 device implementation for 6-12 grade transforms how students learn and teachers teach. Having a device to use for school is a privilege that carries responsibilities. The DCSD Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines rules and guidelines for using DCSD devices and network resources. It outlines what you can and cannot do with school issued technology. Learn more about Digital Dreamers at www.dekalbschoolsga.org/digital-dreamers

DeKalb County School District
Digital Dreamers
Learning Through Innovative Technology

Definition of Social Media

Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Some examples of social media sites or platforms include Facebook, Flickr, GroupMe, Instagram, Kik, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Reddit, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter and YouTube.

BE RESPECTFUL

It is important to represent yourself in a positive manner online. This means thinking about what you post online and considering how it would look to people you know and don't know. Respect is a two-way street between you and others. Would your post or comment look good to college admissions officer? To a future employer? Your parents or teachers? Assume that someone is always observing and monitoring your online actions.

Sometimes social media will be used for a class assignment and the same classroom rules will apply online as they do at school. For example, if you would not make fun of a classmate at school, you shouldn't do it online.
Unless your teacher gives you permission, do not expose content to audiences for whom it was not intended.

AVOID NEGATIVITY, PROFANITY AND CYBERBULLYING

Being responsible for the content you post is important in all social media environments whether at home or at school. Only post accurate information and be accountable for what you say. There is no such thing as being anonymous online. Through an internet IP address your identity can always be determined.

Cyberbullying happens when a person bullies another through electronic technology. There can be a fine line when it comes to cyberbullying. What you consider to be harmless teasing can be hurtful to others.

Cyberbullying includes:

- Intimidating or threatening persons
- Threats against the school or person's property
- Using another person's log-in or password to send inappropriate messages and images
- Creating fake profiles of other persons
- Creating websites to embarrass, threaten, or socially isolate another person
- Circulating offensive photos or videos
- Texting offensive messages
- Creating rumors and posting false information about people

When social media becomes a disruption, even when a post is made during personal time, the school may need to get involved and disciplinary action can be taken such as a parent conference or suspension. In fact, there is no right to privacy when using school-related social media. The school may review what you post at any time. To prevent infractions like this from taking place, review the Student Code of Conduct which prohibits poor behavior and inappropriate digital communications as well.

See here for the Student Code of Conduct:
www.dekalbschoolsga.org/documents/student-relations/code-of-student-conduct.pdf

GET PERMISSION

Asking for permission before posting is important on social media. That picture that you took of a friend may not be something they want shared online. This applies to pictures of strangers as well. You should always ask for permission before taking a photo or video of others. Getting permission before posting is also important because of copyright laws. You can be sued for using photos, songs, logos or other content that does not belong to you. You can avoid legal action by making sure all content that you post was created by or belongs to you.

PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY AND PRIVACY

You are in control of how much information is shared online. There are privacy setting defaults on each social media platform that can be adjusted to control what information is shared publicly. You might decide to have some of your posts private such as posting about class grades or college choices, or public posts such as canceled games due to rain. It's always important to stay updated with privacy changes being made by social media providers.

Some ways you can protect yourself and your privacy online are:

- Only accept friend or follow requests from people you know
- Always log out when using a shared computer or device
- Don't share personal details like your address, date of birth or phone number
- Limit sharing your location or where you are all the time
- Never share your password with friends or others
- Never share your banking information or social security number

Ultimately, your parents are responsible for what you do online when you are a minor. Be open to your parent's suggestions about what information should remain private and what information can be shared publicly even when your parents are not as social media savvy.

FOLLOW SITE RULES AND POLICIES

Each social media site has its own terms of use or agreement. Before signing up to join a site or platform, it is important to review the expectations. It is also important to review updates if or when the policies change. Violating a site or platform's usage agreement can lead to your account being suspended or even terminated.

REPORT PROBLEMS

Part of being a good digital citizen is reporting problems you may see online. Each social media platform has a feature where you can anonymously report disruptions to a positive digital environment. Common issues that should be reported are account impersonation, bullying, criminal activity, harassment, hate speech, inappropriate photos, spam and violence.

If you believe that you or someone you know is being cyberbullied, report the behavior by telling a parent or guardian, school staff member or trusted adult. If you suspect immediate danger, call 911. It is best not to respond or retaliate against cyberbullies.

In the event you experience cyberbullying, it's a good idea to have a plan in place. Never respond to offensive online behavior and save any messages that could be used as evidence when you report the behavior. You can also "block" the cyberbully if they are sending messages directly to you. For more information on reporting cyberbullying, go here: http://cyberbullying.us/resources/teens/

HAVE FUN

Social media was created to connect different people and views from across the world. It can be a place to share with family and friends or get to know about your favorite brands or celebrities. You can have fun by participating in trending topics, dance challenges and commenting during your favorite television show. Social media is a powerful tool when used correctly.

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