



NEBO SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: C – General School Administration
POLICY TITLE: Websites and Social Media
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1. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

- 1.1. The Board of Education of Nebo School District recognizes the District's need to communicate with students, parents, and the community at large. The means of communicating continue to evolve and consist largely of electronic means, including through websites, digital applications (apps), social media, and other methods.
- 1.2. When used appropriately, websites and social media enable schools, students, and parents to communicate and share information in a timely and relevant manner and are therefore approved for school purposes, consistent with this policy.
- 1.3. Use of websites and social media presents challenges such as ensuring student safety and privacy, maintaining professional boundaries, and safeguarding the freedom of speech. This policy establishes the appropriate use of websites and social media by students, employees, and the District.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

Where this policy limits or restricts certain forms of communication between employees and students, the limitations and restrictions do not apply to communications between employees and students: (a) if such communications are for educational, health, safety, emergency, or other legitimate reasons; (b) who are relatives (defined as parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews) or legal guardians; or (c) who have a relationship outside the school setting in conjunction with religious/church groups, community organizations, or other activities unrelated to the District, and they occur in the context of that relationship.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 "Cyber-bullying" defined by [UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-9-601](#), means using the internet, a cell phone, or another device to send or post text, video, or an image with the intent or knowledge, or with reckless disregard, that the text, video, or image will hurt, embarrass, or threaten an individual, regardless of whether the individual directed, consented to, or acquiesced in the conduct, or voluntarily accessed the electronic communication.
- 3.2 "Educator" means a teacher, counselor, administrator, librarian, or other person required to hold a license as per [UTAH CODE ANN., § 53E-6-102](#).

- 3.3 “Electronic Communication”** means any communication, whether written, audio, visual, or otherwise, transmitted via any electronic device. Electronic Communications include, but are not limited to, phone calls, text messages, email messages, direct messages, chats, blogs, or the uploading, downloading, posting, or creating of any material via mobile device, the internet, or any local network.
- 3.4 “Employee”** means any adult, who is not also a K-12 student, employed by Nebo School District.
- 3.5 “Social media”** means any web-based or mobile technologies that enable electronic communication as an interactive dialogue or allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.
- 3.6 “Student”** means a child under eighteen (18) years of age or any K-12 student enrolled in school, in or out of Nebo School District.

4. DISTRICT-CONTROLLED CONTENT

4.1 School and District Websites and Social Media

- 4.1.1** The District and its schools may maintain websites and social media profiles for the purpose of communicating with students, parents, and the public.
- 4.1.2** Any website representing the District as a whole or any of its departments must be created and maintained under the direction of the District’s Technical Services Department. Any social media profile representing the District as a whole or any of its departments must be created and maintained under the direction of the District’s communications and community relations administrator. No other entity shall purport to officially represent the District in this capacity.
- 4.1.3** Any website or social media profile representing an individual school or any of its departments or programs must be created and maintained under the direction of the school principal.

4.2 School-Related Employee Websites and Social Media

- 4.2.1** An employee may maintain a website or social media profile in furtherance of the employee’s job.
- 4.2.2** An employee who creates or maintains a school-related website or social media profile shall notify the school administrator.
- 4.2.3** Any school-related website or social media profile shall comply with all school rules and District policies. Any material or content containing profanity, obscenity, vulgarity, defamation, bullying, harassing, false or inaccurate information, threatening or abusive content, pornography or other indecent material, or any other type of inappropriate material or content is prohibited. In addition, material or content which invades another person’s privacy or promotes activities which are illegal or unsuitable for minors is prohibited.
- 4.2.4** Employees must comply with any and all applicable state and federal laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student photos have been designated as directory information under FERPA and may be posted unless the student’s parent has opted out of directory information disclosure under [Nebo School District Policy JO, Student Records and Data Protection](#).
- 4.2.5** Employees are expected to monitor the content on their school-related site(s), including posts by students. Employees shall ensure that student posts which violate laws or District policies are removed immediately and reported to a school administrator for appropriate disciplinary action.

- 4.2.6** School-related employee websites and social media profiles are authorized only for the purpose of fulfilling the employee’s job duties and may be considered extensions of the classroom or program. Content must be related to the curricular or extracurricular activity and consistent with applicable requirements found in [Nebo School District Policy IIA, Student Instruction and Materials](#). An educator’s school-related website or social media profile is similar to a classroom display and constitutes government speech under the First Amendment, subject to control by the District.
- 4.2.7** Educators and students interacting through a school-related website or social media platform shall maintain the same professional level of communication, behavior, and appearance as though they were in the classroom. Educators must not engage in dialogue or behavior with students that is “peer-like,” but must maintain a formal teacher-student relationship.

5 PERSONAL EMPLOYEE CONTENT

- 5.1** Nothing in this policy prohibits the creation of private websites or social media profiles by employees acting outside the scope of their employment and with personally owned equipment on their own time.
- 5.2** Personal websites and social media profiles may not use official school logos or appear to represent the District or any of its schools or programs.
- 5.3** Employees shall not communicate privately with, nor allow private communications from, students via any personal website or social media profile.
- 5.4** Employees maintaining personal websites or social media profiles shall ensure that photos, videos, text, and all other content will not likely disrupt or cause distraction of school activities. Personal websites and social media profiles must allow the employee to maintain a professional, respectful association with students, colleagues, and the community, and must not undermine the reputation of the District, the school, or its administrators or employees.
- 5.5** Use of District-owned equipment and Internet access may be monitored, and employees have no expectation of privacy in activities utilizing District-owned equipment whether the use is on or off contract time.
- 5.6** Employees are discouraged from using personal websites or social media to conduct school or District business. Use of a personal website or social media profile for work-related communications may subject the contents of the personal website or social media profile, including private communications, to disclosure. The employee may be required to disclose the content in response to a subpoena, court order, discovery request, or request for records under the Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA), [UTAH CODE ANN. § 63G-2-101 et seq.](#) In addition, the District may require disclosure to investigate allegations of misconduct.

6 STUDENT USE

- 6.1** Educators may allow students to use social media for instructional purposes. Such use must be age-appropriate and consistent with [Nebo School District Policy CG, Computer, Email, and Internet Use](#). A school principal may prohibit social media use that violates this paragraph.
- 6.2** Personal social media use by students must not interfere with classroom learning or other educational programs. Student communications made during school hours, on school property, using school equipment (including a take-home device) or internet access, or during a school-sponsored activity must comply with the requirements set forth in [Nebo School District Policy JDE, Student Electronic Devices](#).
- 6.3** Students may not typically be disciplined or denied privileges, including restrictions on extracurricular activities, due to off-campus social media speech, except as permitted by law.¹

¹ [Mahanoy v. B.L.](#), 594 U.S. ____ (2021); [C.I.G v. Siegfried](#), 38 F.4th 1270 (10th Cir. 2022).

Administrators should consult the applicable director or the Legal Department before imposing discipline based on off-campus social media use. Notwithstanding the foregoing, students may be disciplined for off-campus social media use that constitutes cyberbullying or that is otherwise illegal.

7 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 Subject to the parameters outlined in Section 2 above, all electronic communications between employees and students must be school-related and should, where possible, be done through the employee's official school medium.
- 7.2 Consistent with [UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-9-203](#), employees shall not initiate or continue to discuss any of the following issues with students via electronic communication without: (a) obtaining appropriate parental consent; or (b) having an appropriate and legitimate educational, health, safety, emergency, or other reason:
- 7.2.1 Political affiliations;
 - 7.2.2 Political philosophies or beliefs of the student or student's family, except as provided under [UTAH CODE ANN. § 53G-10-202](#) or other applicable federal or state laws, rules, or regulations;
 - 7.2.3 Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 - 7.2.4 Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - 7.2.5 Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 - 7.2.6 Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has a close family relationship;
 - 7.2.7 Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with attorneys, doctors, or ministers;
 - 7.2.8 Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 - 7.2.9 Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- 7.3 Such discussions between employees and students via electronic communication on any the above issues without appropriate parental consent or having a legitimate reason constitutes an inappropriate boundary invasion in violation of [Nebo School District Policy GBEF, Employee-Student Standards of Conduct](#), and may also be in violation of the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment and the Utah Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

8 VIOLATION

Any employee found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, suspension, termination, verbal or written warnings/reprimands, or alternate employment placement. In imposing such discipline, all facts and circumstances of the incident(s) shall be considered.

EXHIBITS

None

REFERENCES

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\), 20 USC § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99](#)
[Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 USC § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98](#)
[UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-9-203](#)
[Government Records Access and Management Act \(GRAMA\), UTAH CODE ANN. § 63G-2-101 et seq.](#)
[Mahanov v. B.L., 594 U.S. \(2021\)](#)
[C1.G v. Siegfried, 38 F.4th 1270 \(10th Cir. 2022\)](#)
[Nebo School District Policy GBEF, Employee-Student Standards of Conduct](#)

[Nebo School District Policy GCPD, Employee Discipline, Administrative Leave, and Orderly Termination](#)
[Nebo School District Policy IIA, Student Instruction and Materials](#)
[Nebo School District Policy JDE, Student Electronic Devices](#)
[Nebo School District Policy JHFA, Child Abuse or Neglect](#)
[Nebo School District Policy JO, Student Records and Data Protection](#)

FORMS

None

HISTORY

Revised 8 November 2023 – updated consistent with *Mahanoy* and *Siegfried*; made technical changes.

Revised 13 January 2021 – renumbered from GBHB; restated purpose and philosophy; added provisions for student use of social media; updated terminology; updated Utah Code citations; reorganized certain provisions.

Revised 13 February 2013 – added restrictions on employee communications with students via social media consistent with Utah Code § 53A-13-301 (Utah FERPA).

Adopted 11 January 2012 (numbered GBHB).
