

**North Shore Country Day School
2010-2011 Social Media Guidelines for Faculty and Staff**

New technologies, such as social networking tools, provide exciting new ways for each of us to collaborate and communicate. But, you need to consider the realities that impact your use of social media both professionally and personally. You must role model appropriate behavior when using social networks as you do in all other areas of school life. Our aim is to make sure you and your reputation are protected.

One of the challenges in the digital age is that everything you write, post or upload online leaves a long-lasting digital footprint. What you believe to be private in the digital world has the potential for becoming public, even without your knowledge or consent. This digital footprint can become a permanent record that can potentially be seen by students, their families, alumni and prospective new members (families and colleagues) of the North Shore community.

Social networks, even those designed for education, give rise to unique concerns related to their use. Because of this, North Shore has defined the following guidelines:

CLASS USE

When using social media with students, the social media tool should be on a network created by you or one that allows for direct oversight by you and is for use with all students. Each social media tool has its own set of hidden nuisances, which makes selecting the appropriate one to meet your learning objectives more difficult. While students may need to conceal their identities online, it is important that you clearly identify yourself to the casual site visitor by using your proper name in any class-based social networking activity, and include contact information. When selecting a new social media tool, you must consult with the Technology Department so they can help you proceed in the best direction to meet your curricular goals.

PERSONAL USE

While North Shore respects your rights to use social media and networking sites as well as personal websites and blogs, it is important that your use does not damage the reputation of North Shore, its employees, students or families. Take care to set appropriate boundaries between your personal and public online behavior. Your postings on social media sites should respect copyright and fair use guidelines.

We recommend you carefully review your privacy settings and use good judgment when posting text, video(s) and photo(s) online (e.g. blogs, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Facebook, etc). If you need assistance, please ask a member of the Technology Department.

You may wish to regularly review your personal pages, especially when content is posted by others, to be aware of what others post about you. Photos or videos of you that are tagged may be available to anyone searching social networks. As in all social situations, remember that you represent North Shore both in and outside the scope of the school day. People draw conclusions, however erroneous, based on online activities, which may affect their perceptions of your professionalism.

FRIENDING

Friend relationships can provide access to your posts, pictures and information through indirect friend connections depending on your privacy settings. If one member of the North Shore community shares something you have posted, you lose control of your information. Social media sites continually change their privacy settings and need to be regularly monitored. There are basic risks you take when communicating with students, parents and alumni on social networking sites.

STUDENTS: You and your students have a unique relationship that is central to their educational process. The teacher/student relationship is not one of equals, and because the balance of power favors the adults, friendships with students risk being, or appearing, coercive. Ultimately, teacher friendships with students risk the emotional safety of the child. Just as you should not have a social friendship with one of your students, do not have "friend" relationships with North Shore students currently enrolled in the School on any social networking sites. By doing so, you expose yourself to responsibility for addressing any rule-breaking that may be observed through postings and images on students' pages. You may also give the impression that some students have greater access to feedback and other communication or otherwise blur the lines of your working relationship with your students in their minds or the minds of others.

PARENTS: You should use discretion when "friending" any current or past School parents. These relationships can imply they have a level of access to you that is not consistent with members of the School community with whom you are not "friends." It may also blur personal and professional boundaries. All official communication between you and parents should occur from school provided accounts and not through social media sites.

ALUMNI: Although North Shore encourages you to keep in touch with alumni and past students, this contact presents unique challenges and risks. We strongly urge you to use discretion and good judgment when "friending" an alumni who may have siblings in the School, may be connected with current students, or are under the age of 18.

CONCLUSION

If North Shore believes your activity on a social networking site, blog or personal website violates the School's policies, North Shore may request you cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Thanks to the following schools for sharing and allowing us to use ideas and language from their Social Media policies:

- Montclair Kimberly Academy - Montclair, New Jersey
- Castilleja School - Palo Alto, California
- The Urban School - San Francisco, California
- Harker School - San Jose, California
- Rye Country Day School - Rye, New York

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