

# NORTHERN WESTMORELAND CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

No. 816

SECTION: OPERATIONS

TITLE: CENTER SOCIAL MEDIA

ADOPTED:

REVISED:

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process and standards for approval and operation of center-owned social media accounts, and to identify the differences between personally owned social media accounts and those maintained by the center.

## Definitions

**Social media** - a category of Internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content, including photos and videos. Social media includes **social networks**, which are online platforms where users can create profiles, share information and personal messages, and connect with others.

**Center-owned social media account** - a social media account, regardless of platform, that is approved by the Joint Operating Committee and operated by a designated center employee(s), and is designed to further the educational mission of the center by providing information to the school community and general public.

**Personal social media account** - a social media account, regardless of platform, that is attributed to and operated by an employee, individual Joint Operating Committee member or student for personal use and is not approved by the Joint Operating Committee as an official communications channel of the center.

**Nonpublic forum** – created when a center-owned social media account enables members of the public to read and receive center information, but the center has not designated opportunity for expressive activity by the public, and no commenting or posting of information by members of the public is permitted. In terms of social media, the ability to comment, post or reply is disabled on the center’s account for public users.

## Authority

The Joint Operating Committee shall approve all official social media accounts created and/or maintained as center-owned accounts.

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All center-owned social media accounts shall display the official name and logo of the center.

The Joint Operating Committee establishes center-owned social media accounts as a **nonpublic forum** and directs center staff to disable functions allowing public users to comment or post information on center-owned social media accounts.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Joint Operating Committee designates the Administrative Director or designee to oversee all center-owned social media accounts and serve as the primary contact person for center-owned social media accounts.

The Administrative Director or designee shall notify students and staff about this policy through employee and student handbooks, posting on the center website and by other appropriate methods.

All center staff assigned to monitor and maintain center-owned social media accounts shall receive training on:

Regularly reviewing center-owned social media accounts, in coordination with the center's chief communications representative, to update, remove and/or correct information.

Complying with confidentiality provisions of student and staff information, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations.

Monitoring content for confidentiality and intellectual property violations, documenting potential violations, and notifying appropriate center staff to consider further action.

Monitoring content for web accessibility standards and responding to public requests for accommodations.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Posting of Personally Identifiable Information**

The Joint Operating Committee authorizes posting of student images in photos or videos depicting the educational process or center-related events on center-owned social media accounts, unless the students' parents/guardians have opted out of sharing directory information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Joint Operating Committee policy.

The Joint Operating Committee prohibits posting of other personally identifiable information of students on center-owned social media accounts without the consent of the parent/guardian,

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in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations.

The Joint Operating Committee prohibits posting of staff images in photos or videos when a staff member has submitted a request to the Administrative Director or designee that their image not be posted publicly online.

The Joint Operating Committee directs center (school) staff to post images and information to social media accounts in a manner that protects the safety and security of students and staff, such as posting images without identification.

### Accessibility

The Joint Operating Committee directs center staff who maintain center-owned social media accounts to post content that is accessible to individuals with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible based on the limitations of the platform. This shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Including alternate text descriptions or captions for images.
2. Including captions for video content.
3. Avoiding text that is posted as an image.
4. Creating links and attachments in formats that are accessible to screen readers and other assistive technology.
5. Formatting text so that it is accessible to screen readers and other assistive technology.

All center-owned social media accounts shall contain clear contact information that may be used by members of the public to request accommodations or assistance.

### Intellectual Property Rights

The illegal use of copyrighted, branded or trademarked materials or trade secrets is prohibited on center-owned social media accounts. All content shall be subject to copyright fair use guidelines and applicable laws, regulations and Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations.

### Connecting with Other Social Media Accounts

Content or information posted to center-owned social media accounts shall not be connected to other social media accounts through linking or tagging if the outside account is for a commercial application, product or service and the center or its employees would receive financial or other compensation as a result of the connection.

Center-owned social media accounts shall not be connected to social media accounts of individual students through linking or tagging.

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Center-owned social media accounts may be connected through linking or tagging to social media accounts of center-related groups when the content or information has been reviewed and approved by the center's administrative director.

### Personal Social Media Accounts

The center shall not authorize, endorse or participate in posting on private social media accounts of individual Joint Operating Committee members or center employees. Joint Operating Committee members and employees are strongly encouraged to use privacy settings on social media accounts and to clearly identify that it is their personal social media account and that it does not officially represent the Joint Operating Committee or center. In accordance with Joint Operating Committee policy establishing professional boundaries, center employees should only communicate with students through center-provided communication devices or platforms, and shall not follow, accept or make requests to connect or befriends with current students on personal social networking or social media platforms.

The center respects employees' freedom of expression. The center does not actively monitor personal social media accounts of current employees; however, the center reserves the right to address employees' job-related speech or employee speech posted on social media that has the potential to affect the center's operations. Speech that takes place off-site and on an employee's own time, including posting on personal social media accounts, may be addressed if the center establishes that the employee's expression infringed on the interests of the center in promoting the efficient and effective functioning and educational purpose of the center. If employee speech or expression would violate law or Joint Operating Committee policy in a traditional forum, it is also prohibited in an online forum. When an employee speaks as a citizen on a matter of public concern, the center shall consult with the school solicitor in determining the appropriate course of action, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Joint Operating Committee policy.

Student use of personal social media accounts shall be addressed in accordance with applicable Joint Operating Committee policies and administrative regulations related to student conduct, expression and students' individual rights and responsibilities. In accordance with Joint Operating Committee policy, the center shall ensure that students are provided education on network etiquette and appropriate online behavior for students, including interaction with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response.

### Consequences

A center employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Joint Operating Committee policy and administrative regulations.

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### PSBA New 4/21 © 2021 PSBA

Legal

24 P.S. 1850.1

Pol. 815

Pol. 913

Pol. 103

Pol. 104

Pol. 911

Pol. 113.3

Pol. 216

Pol. 814

20 U.S.C. 1232g

34 CFR Part 99

42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq

29 U.S.C. 794

28 CFR 35.160

Pol. 103.1

Pol. 824

24 P.S. 1122

24 P.S. 2070.1a et seq

22 Pa. Code 235.1 et seq

U.S. Const. Amend I

Pol. 317

Pol. 320

24 P.S. 1303.1-A

47 U.S.C. 254

Pol. 218

Pol. 220

Pol. 235

Pol. 249

Pol. 317.1

Knight First Amendment Inst. at Columbia Univ. v Trump 928 F.3d 226 (2d Cir. 2019)

Davison v. Randall, 912 F.3d 666 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2019)

Carcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006)

Mike Cambell v Cheri Toalson Reish, 986 F.3d 822 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2021)

Pickering v. Board of Education, 3914 U.S. 563 (1968)

Connick v. Myers, 461 U.S. 138 (1983)

Rankin v. McPherson, 483 U.S. 378 (1988)

Pol. 801