

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS
HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA/EMAIL USE POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT.

New Mexico School for the Arts (“School”) is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment for its students, employees and associated persons. The School encourages positive relationships between students, employees and associated persons. Students are expected to follow all School policies, including New Mexico School for the Arts’ policy on Internet and Computer Use when using email and social media as a form of communication with fellow students, employees and associated persons.

II. PURPOSE OF POLICY.

The School has adopted these policies and guidelines for **social media communications** between employees, students, parents and other associated persons; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by School users online; to prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information; and to comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act. In addition, the policy is intended to address and avoid negative legal and other ramifications that may stem from using these media tools during School time or during non-School time, when the use of the media tools disrupts or negatively impacts School operations/activities.

Social media has many benefits, but when social media postings violate the law or School policies, or create a substantial disruption to the school community and/or school environment, the School’s administrator may have an obligation to respond and take appropriate action, including but not limited to investigation and possible discipline. This is true for both students and employees.

Under certain circumstances, the School may discipline students who violate rules of appropriate conduct, which includes but is not limited to the use of social networking sites during or outside of school.

The School is not responsible for your use or misuse of social media.

III. USEFUL DEFINITIONS.

- A. Associated Persons. “Associated Persons” includes, but is not limited to, parents, governing body representatives, volunteers, consultants, contracted employees, walk-on coaches, child care/enrichment program providers, vendors and after-school youth services providers.
- B. Blogs. “Blogs” are updated personal journals with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer intended for public viewing.
- C. Digital Publishing. “Digital Publishing Site” is an internet personal publishing service that provides products and services for consumers to preserve their digital photos or films, such as Shutterfly, Flickr and YouTube.
- D. Podcasts. “Podcasts” are audio broadcasts that have been converted to MP3 or other audio file format for playback in a digital music player.
- E. Social Media. “Social Media” is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

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- F. Social Networking Web Sites. “Social Networking Web Sites” are web sites where users can create and customize their own profiles with photos, videos, and information, such as Facebook, Google+, Habbo and other social networking sites.
- G. Tags. “Tags” (Tagging) are keywords assigned to a webpage for the purpose of easy identification, organization, aggregation and searching. Most social media sites allow users to tag the content they share online such as articles, photos, videos or blog posts. Tags help users find content they are looking for through social media sites and other online platforms.
- H. Wikis. “Wikis” are websites that allow the creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages via a browser using a simplified markup language or a text editor.

IV. SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTIONS GENERALLY.

- A. Use of Social Media During School Hours. The School blocks access to certain social media Web sites from access using School computers. However, the New Mexico School for the Arts recognizes that not all social media tools may be blocked and that new social media sites are evolving. It is the school’s policy that blogging or the use of other social media tools, or personal Internet activities during school hours or on school-issued computers is not permitted, unless specifically authorized by your teacher or the School’s administrator. Be aware that pursuant to the School’s Internet and Computer Use Policy, authorized School personnel may access school computers to determine whether your computer use is consistent with this policy.
- B. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. Students are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated content and for following the provider’s rules of use. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time – protect your privacy and consider the privacy of others when you post. As a general rule, “do no harm,” whether to yourself, to the School or to others. Students may expose themselves to potential legal action for irresponsible conduct online. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be a copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or pornographic or obscene. Both civil and criminal penalties exist for abusing social media tools.
- C. PROHIBITED CONDUCT AFFECTING SCHOOL POPULATION/ENVIRONMENT. The School’s policies against bullying, hazing, and sexual or other harassment apply fully to the use of the Internet, including blogging, where the conduct or the impact of the conduct affects the School, the School’s population, and/or the learning environment. Posting inappropriate threatening, harassing, racist, biased, derogatory, disparaging or bullying comments toward or about any student, employee, or associated person on any website is prohibited and may subject the author to discipline. In addition, threats are taken seriously and are subject to law enforcement intervention, including but not limited to formal threat assessments. If your online conduct violates or has the effect of violating these policies or any other School policy that protects against threatening, abusive or offensive conduct, the School will take appropriate actions to ensure such conduct ceases, including a demand that you stop the offensive commentary, remove the offensive postings, disciplinary actions, or reporting conduct to law enforcement agencies.

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This Social Media/Email Use Policy was amended by the Governing Council of New Mexico School for the Arts, effective August 5, 2015.

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ATTEST:



SHERRY THOMPSON, Chair,
Governing Council



PAULA TACKETT, Secretary,
Governing Council