## Social Media Guidelines for Schroon Lake Central School

The Schroon Lake Central School District recognizes the importance of social media as a communication tool but also acknowledges the potential risks associate with its misuse. This policy establishes expectations for professional conduct in online environments to protect students, staff, and the integrity of the district.

Public social media networks or social networking sites (SNS) are defined as any electronic communication platform.

All employees of the Schroon Lake Central School District are expected to maintain high standards, including online and social media activity, whether conducted during, or outside for work hours.

When an employee can be identified as a district employee or when their online conduct impacts the school environment, the following expectations apply.

### Official District Use

Official district use is defined as the use of social media by an employee, on behalf of his or her department, program, classroom, that has been authorized for the express purpose of communicating the district's interests for specific programming and policies. The authorization must be granted in writing by the Superintendent or her/his designee. There are official uses of social media that are not public such as the use of internal blogs for collaboration among grade levels, committees, or project teams. Employees are prohibited from setting up public SNS for any official district use unless they have obtained prior written approval from the superintendent or her/his designee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.

### Requests & Approvals for Professional Use

"Professional use" is defined as an employee's use of SNS for the purpose of his/her specific job responsibilities or duties through an approved externally facing site or a district.

The official district website, and approved SNS will remain the primary source for all content related to or about the district.

Employees' participation in external SNS for professional use requires prior written approval from the superintendent and/or her/his designee. The request must specify the purpose, platform, and audience of the SNS.

All account holder names and login passwords must be on file and accessible by central office personnel.

**Professional Use**

The district does not permit any direct communication or contact between employees and current students on non-district approved SNS. Teachers are encouraged to use existing district-established tools such as School tools, and approved LMS to communicate with students, or parents. Non-district approved SNS must not be used to assign and/or collect student work or to provide feedback to students.

When using social media for professional purposes always identify yourself and your position within the district use your actual name never create an alias or post as anonymous misidentifying yourself or providing false information may result in disciplinary action the district e-mail address attached to your name implies that you are acting on behalf of the district

District personnel agree and acknowledge that when they create or post material on any SNS district related site they are in effect content publishers as such they are subject to a host of ethical and legal obligations including but not limited to compliance with the federal digital Millennium copyright act.

Any use of school identifying information such as logos, mascots must be with the explicit permission of the superintendent or her/his designee.

## Personal Use and Responsibility

"Personal use" is defined as use that is not related to an employee's job function.

- **The district respects employees' First Amendment free speech rights.**
- **Online conduct must reflect the professionalism expected in all employee interactions.**
- **District personnel must not post material that could disrupt classroom instruction or district operations.**
- **Personal social media use on *district-owned hardware* is prohibited.**
- **Limited personal use on *non-district devices* may be permitted during personal time, provided it does not interfere with job responsibilities.**

**Professional Standards for Online Behavior**

- **Online behavior must demonstrate integrity, respect, and consideration equivalent to face-to-face communication.**
- **Communications on social networking sites must meet the highest professional standards.**
- **Unethical, threatening, illegal, or disruptive online activities are strictly prohibited.**
- **Employees are personally responsible for all content they publish online.**
- **Posts and comments are public information—even with privacy settings applied—and should reflect sound professional judgment.**
- **When posting about district-related topics, employees must maintain professional discretion and assume content is publicly accessible.**

- **Personal opinions shared online should include a disclaimer clarifying that views expressed are *personal* and not official district positions.**
- **Before posting personal photographs, consider how they reflect on professional reputation; do not use copyrighted images or district logos on personal pages.**

**Interactions and Content Related to Students**

- **District personnel should not use personal social media to form or maintain relationships with current students who are not family members.**
- **Employees are discouraged from engaging in any online communication with current students through personal accounts.**
- **Posting photographs of [non-familial] currently enrolled students, or student work on personal social media pages without authorization is prohibited. [Classroom or event photos should be posted on the district's official page(s).]**
- **Photos or content representing the district should only be shared through authorized district social media channels.**

**Disciplinary Measures**

- District personnel who violate any provisions of the district's social media policy or professional conduct expectations may be subject to disciplinary action including termination of employment in accordance with legal guidelines, district policy, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- District personnel should report known violations of the district SNS policy to their building principal or superintendent.

**Revised or Deleted – Not in final draft:**

"Personal use" is defined as use that is not related to an employee's job function.

The district is mindful of employees' First Amendment free speech rights.

Online conduct should be consistent with the professionalism and expectations of school district employees' face-face interactions.

District personnel who participate in social networking sites must not post any material which could result in the disruption of classroom or district activities.

The district does not allow personal use of social media on district owned hardware.

Personal use of social media during the workday may be permitted on non-district owned devices during staff's personal time so long as it does not interfere with responsibilities.

Still need to be revised from here down.....

Online behavior must reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that are used in face-to-face contact. All communications done through SNS must be in accordance with the highest professional standards. Online activities or communications which are unethical, threatening, illegal - or which cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents, or other members of the community must be avoided.

District employees are personally responsible for all comments and information they publish online.

Posting comments or having online conversations on social media sites make those comments public and available to anyone who has online access. Be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what is posted online is public and should be within the bounds of professional discretion.

Comments related to the district should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, employees should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain. Remember that what is posted could be interpreted as an extension of your professional position. If posting comments or viewpoints on topics related to the district using any online medium you must state that the information is representative of your personal views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of the district.

Before posting personal photographs that represent you consider how the images reflect on your reputation and professionalism. Remember not to use copyrighted images district logos and personal pages

> District personnel should not use personal SNS to create or maintain relationships with current, non-familial students. For purposes of these guidelines, personal relationships with students means any behavior or conduct that is unrelated to coursework or official school matters.
>
> OR -
>
> Regarding personal SNS use, district employees are discouraged from maintaining online SNS communications with current students.

Posting photographs of currently enrolled students, or district related events on a teacher's personal page without permission is strictly prohibited.

Or -

Photographs of school related activities should not be shared on teachers' personal pages unless done with the authorized SNS post.