

POLICY	BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND
RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	POLICY 115

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define expectations for:

- The responsible use of social media for Frederick County Public Schools' (FCPS) use.
- The responsible use of social media to enhance the education process and improve system-wide communications efforts.
- Maintaining the safety and privacy of individuals.

II. Definition

Social media - Any form of electronic communication through which users communicate interactively. Social media include, but are not limited to, blogs and microblogs (like Twitter), application software (like Instagram), and social networking websites (like Facebook).

III. Policy Statement

The Board of Education (Board) is committed to the responsible use of social media to further its goals to facilitate community engagement, encourage collaborative communications, and enhance the education process.

The Board's overarching goal in social media is to foster relationships with the community, model positive digital citizenship for staff and students, and celebrate school system and student success.

This policy also supports the Board's goal of equipping each and every student to be an empowered learner.

It is an expectation that employees and students use social media in a civil, respectful, and safety conscious manner that does not infringe on the rights of others or in a manner that is contrary to the mission of the school system.

IV. Procedures

A. General

1. Notice of the provisions of this policy and individual responsibilities will be communicated annually to FCPS students, parents, and employees.

2. All content transmitted through social media for FCPS-sanctioned activities is subject to all relevant Board policies and FCPS regulations, particularly related to acceptable use, anti-bullying, and data privacy expectations.

B. Compliance

1. Digital tools and social media used with students for FCPS-sanctioned activities will be reviewed and authorized for FCPS use.
2. FCPS technology and authorized digital tools and social media are accessible for instructional use and FCPS-sanctioned activities consistent with current student and employee roles and instructional requirements.
3. FCPS technology, digital tools, and social media will comply with licensing and fair use agreements and applicable policies. Individuals will abide by the terms of service and privacy policies.
4. Digital tools and social media that do not publish terms of service and privacy policies consistent with federal and state student privacy protections may not be used for FCPS-sanctioned activities.
5. All authorized digital tools will comply with the federal law, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article §4-131, Student Data Privacy Act of 2015.
6. In order to comply with the federal law, Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA):
 - a. FCPS will deploy technology that attempts to filter abusive, libelous, obscene, offensive, profane, threatening, sexually explicit, pornographic, illegal, or other inappropriate material that is harmful to minors.
 - b. Employees will monitor online FCPS-sanctioned student activities including social media and digital tools, to the extent practical.
7. In order to comply with federal and state laws, the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act and Misuse of Electronic Communication or Interactive Computer Service (Grace's Law), staff will provide ongoing instruction to students concerning responsible, appropriate, and civil online behavior including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and regarding cyberbullying awareness and response.
8. In conformance with the Maryland User Name and Password Privacy Protection and Exclusion Act, *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Labor and Employment Article §3-712, staff is prohibited from requesting or requiring an employee or applicant for employment to disclose any account credentials used for accessing a personal social media account or service.

C. Professional Use

1. Organizational social media accounts created by employees are the property of FCPS.
2. If an employee’s job responsibilities change or employment is discontinued through resignation, retirement, termination, or any other cause, an employee shall relinquish information necessary to maintain a professional social media account and may no longer access the account.

D. Responsibilities

1. The Board will review this policy every two years and will recommend revisions as necessary, with input from the Executive Director of Public Affairs; the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation; and the Director of Technology Infrastructure.
2. The Executive Director of Public Affairs will maintain a presence on social media for FCPS.
3. The Superintendent will develop regulation to further implement procedures for staff to execute the intent of this policy, inclusive of input and review by the Executive Director of Public Affairs; the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation; and the Director of Technology Infrastructure. An annual report will be provided to the Board regarding implementation of this policy.

Cross reference:

- FCPS Regulation [100-08](#) *Responsible Use of Social Media*
- FCPS Regulation [400-73](#) *Responsible Use of Digital Technology – Students*
- FCPS Regulation [300-45](#) *Responsible Use of Digital Technology – Staff*
- Board Policy [442](#) *Student Data Privacy*
- FCPS Regulation [400-96](#) *Student Data Privacy*
- FCPS Regulation [400-77](#) *Computers: FCPS Website Publishing*
- FCPS Regulation [400-18](#) *Electronic Devices – Student Use*

Legal References	Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA), 15 U.S.C. §6501		
	Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §2701-2711		
	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232(g); 34 C.F.R. Part 99		
	Protecting Children in the 21 st Century Act, 47 C.F.R. §54.520(c)(1)(i) and 54.520(c)(2)(i)		
	Title XVII, Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), 47 U.S.C. §254(h)		
	Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §3-805, Misuse of Electronic Communication or Interactive Computer Service (Grace’s Law)		
	Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §4-131, Student Data Privacy Act of 2015		
Reference			
Policy History	Reviewed 2020	Adopted 3/14/18	Revised 10/7/2020