



Est. 1865

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**Dr. Elida MacArthur, Superintendent**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This communication aims to inform you of the challenges we face with students' use of social media, the use of district and online applications, and the possible consequences that students may face if their behavior is not corrected.

**Responsibilities of Digital Citizenship.** Students are responsible for their posts on social media, district-provided applications, and other online platforms. District Policies and the Technology Use Agreement expect students to use technology to enhance their learning, promote empathy, and ensure a positive and respectful online environment within the school community.

Some students use social media and online applications to engage in behaviors that violate ethical norms, community standards, or legal regulations. Below are some common examples of inappropriate online applications and social media use:

- **Cyberbullying:** Harassing, intimidating, or threatening others online, often repeatedly, through messages, comments, or sharing of personal information.
- **Hate Speech:** Posting discriminatory, offensive, or prejudiced content targeting individuals or groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or other characteristics.
- **Posting Offensive Content:** Sharing inappropriate or offensive images, videos, or text that may be harmful or offensive to others.
- **Trolling:** Engaging in online behavior intending to provoke and upset others by posting inflammatory or irrelevant comments.
- **Sharing Private Information:** Revealing personal, confidential, or private information about oneself or others without consent.
- **Impersonation:** Creating fake profiles or impersonating others online with the intent to deceive, harm, or harass.
- **Online Harassment:** Engaging in persistent and unwelcome online behavior that causes distress or fear in the targeted individual.
- **Invasion of Privacy:** Violating the privacy of others by sharing their personal information, images, or conversations without consent.
- **Engaging in Illegal Activities:** Using social media to plan, promote, or engage in illegal activities, such as drug abuse, violence, or other criminal behavior.
- **Spreading Misinformation:** Sharing false or misleading information that can contribute to the spread of rumors, false narratives, or harmful beliefs.
- **Explicit Content:** Posting or sharing explicit or inappropriate content, including nudity, sexually explicit material, or graphic violence.

Below are the possible consequences when students engage in unsafe practices online and on social media, like the ones mentioned above. Depending on the severity, below is a possible list of consequences but not limited to:

- **Educational Programs:** Mandating students to participate in educational programs focusing on responsible and ethical social media use.
- **Warning and Counseling:** Issuing a warning to the student and involving school counselors to discuss the consequences of their actions, emphasizing the impact on themselves and others.
- **Temporary Loss of Privileges:** Suspending or restricting a student's access to school-provided technology, including computers or internet access, for a defined period.
- **Behavior Contracts:** Implementing behavior contracts outlining specific expectations for online conduct, consequences for future violations, and the need for improved behavior.
- **Suspension or Expulsion:** In severe cases, schools may suspend or even expel students for repeated or serious violations that significantly disrupt the learning environment.
- **Legal Consequences:** Schools may involve law enforcement in instances involving illegal activities or serious harm, leading to legal consequences for the student.

It is important for parents and school officials to work together to provide a safe learning environment for our students. We ask you to commit to doing the following:

- **Review** this communication with your child, especially if they have social media accounts,
- **Model and promote** digital literacy, responsible online citizenship,
- **Report** harmful behavior to social media platforms, inform the school, and
- **Continue** to have open communication with your child about acceptable online behavior.

Please remember that inappropriate social media use can have serious consequences online and offline. **The schools will be reviewing this letter with 4th- 8th grade students and will ask the students to sign that this information has been shared with them. Students need to know that engaging in inappropriate use of technology can lead to severe consequences.** Please actively engage in your children's online lives and help them develop as digital citizens who use social media and other online applications in a respectful and responsible manner.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Elida MacArthur*