



**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLETIN**

TITLE: Social Media Policy for Students

NUMBER: BUL-6399.0

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ROUTING
All Employees
All Locations

POLICY: The Los Angeles Unified School District is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment for its students, employees and associated persons. The Los Angeles Unified School District encourages positive relationships between students, employees and associated persons. There is, however, a distinction between being supportive of students and the real or perceived breach of confidentiality or misconduct, especially online. Students are expected to follow all District policies, including BUL-999.9, *Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems*, [BUL-6231.0, Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support](#), and [BUL-5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy \(Student-to-Student and Student-to-Adult\)](#) when using social media as a form of communication.

MAJOR CHANGES: This is a new Bulletin.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bulletin is to provide policies and guidelines regarding student social media use; to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by students online; to prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information, and to comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All social media on a District device and on the District’s Network is always subject to District policies. Social Media is defined as more than just social networking. Blogs, wikis, and messaging services are also classified as social media. At all times, in and out of school, social media use on district devices is covered by the AUP and this bulletin.

BACKGROUND: The use of the Internet in schools and at home can have a major positive impact on a student’s education. For example, participating online with an audience beyond the classroom provides an opportunity to engage with others and experience diverse perspectives. The use of the Internet also presents certain risks, which can be reduced greatly when students learn how to participate safely and appropriately online.



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Teaching students to be critical consumers and creators of online material will help them be better positioned for college and career success. Thus, when students are not aware of the implications of their social media behavior and engagement, it can influence their future, disrupt the learning environment and potentially affect other students, staff, and administrators. Social media systems are designed around gathering, storing, and sharing information about their users. Students need guidance on how to responsibly and productively participate online to begin establishing a positive digital footprint. As stated in BUL–5181.1, Policy Regarding Internet Safety for Students, all students who are provided access to the Internet must participate in an Internet safety education program. As social media use continues to grow, social media awareness and education is crucial to effectively navigating and productively participating in such online spaces.

GUIDELINES: I. DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS: Social media is comprised of online platforms where users engage one another and share information and ideas through text, video, or pictures. To be a responsible social media user, students shall understand the different types of social media available and ways to engage in safe and productive ways online. For more information about adolescents and social media, or applications and platforms, visit [Common Sense Media](#).

The following terms provide a general overview of common social media tools, practices, and features:

Apps are applications used to post media and are accessed primarily through mobile devices. Apps can access the user’s pictures, personal information, and GPS location.

Associated Persons includes, but is not limited to, parents, parent-elected leaders of school committees, representatives and volunteers, consultants, contracted employees, walk-on coaches, child care/enrichment program providers, vendors and after-school youth services providers.

Blogs/Microblogs are personal websites that can serve as journals where a user can post a variety of content authored by the user and authored by others for public viewing

Confidential data refers to District-related content such as (but not limited to) grade and exam information, attendance data and behavior incidents.

Cloud Computing, otherwise known as ‘using the cloud,’ requires an Internet connection and is the practice of accessing files across multiple devices over the



Internet.

Digital Citizenship is the practice of critical engagement and respectful behavior online, which is demonstrated through the digital content a student posts.

Digital Footprint is determined/defined by an individual's choice of content to post and profiles made across multiple websites, apps, and other platforms.

Media Sharing Sites are sites where users can store and share content such as video and pictures.

Social Media, also referred to as social networking, is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share and view information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

Social Networking Sites are sites where users create and customize their own profiles with music, video, and other personal information in addition to connecting with other users.

Tagging is the practice of identifying and assigning information to a digital artifact such as a website, blog post, photo, video, or article for the purpose of easy identification, organization, aggregation, and searching. Tagging helps users find content they are looking for through across online platforms.

Wikis are websites that allow a user to add, modify, or delete content in collaboration with others.

II. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

District electronic devices are provided for educational purposes, including the use of social media. Approved social media is to be used at school for educational purposes only and under the direction of a teacher or school leader. Home use of social media on District or personal electronic devices is limited to only sites approved by the district's web filtering system. According to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule ("COPPA"), it is illegal for companies to collect user information and track the online usage of children under 13.

Therefore, the only appropriate social media for children 12 and under is designed specifically for that age group. (Refer to BUL-999.9, *Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems*)

All existing policies and behavior guidelines that cover student conduct on the school premises and at school-related activities similarly apply to the online environment in those same venues.

1. Students shall consider their behavior and engagement when



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- communicating with others and sharing content in social media spaces. Students must be aware that any content or information shared privately through social media on electronic devices can still be viewed, accessed, and distributed by others—even their peers. When using District network and/or electronic devices, students should expect the District to be able to access, view, record, check, receive, monitor, track, and log any social media activity.
2. Students shall engage in privacy practices and respect the privacy of others. Students shall exercise good judgment when using the built-in camera and recording capabilities of electronic devices. Students must always obtain permission before taking pictures, recording video, or recording audio of any person. Permission must be obtained before posting such material online. Be aware that parent permission is required before posting material that includes any student under the age of 18. Remember that a signed Los Angeles Unified School District Parent/Guardian Publicity Authorization and Release is required to post any images or video of any student under 18 on school property or at school-sponsored activities. When signing a Publicity Authorization and Release form, parents should receive explicit notification if such material will be posted on a social media platform.
 3. Students shall not share confidential information about themselves or others. Sharing personal information about oneself, family, peers or others can lead to safety and privacy concerns. Personal information includes (but is not limited to) one's full name, address, phone number, school, and birthday. (Refer to BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems and BUL-2469, Pupil Records: Access, Confidentiality, and Notice of Educational Rights, April 24, 2006).
 4. Students must represent themselves honestly and ethically online and are not to mislead others by impersonating another person (student, staff, or any other person). (Refer to BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems).
 5. Students shall use respectful language and tone with others both on and offline. Respectful language includes avoiding vulgarity, profanity and slurs based on the gender, race, disability, or orientation of another person. [Refer to BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems and BUL-5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy [Student- to-Student and Student-to-Adult]]
 6. Students should be aware that district employees are mandated reporters of



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child abuse. Should information posted on social media indicate that a minor is being abused, this information will be reported to the authorities. Further, should information on social media indicate that a child is a danger to him/herself or others, district employees are required to report this information to the appropriate authorities. [Refer to BUL–1347.2, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements and BUL–5799.0, Threat Assessment and Management (Student-to-Student, Student-to-Adult)]

7. Students shall access age-appropriate, educational content when using District electronic devices or network resources. Accessing, producing, or posting inappropriate material may lead to serious consequences. Posting sexually explicit images of minors (for example, sexting) is a serious crime, even when the poster is a minor, and may constitute child abuse. (Refer to BUL–6231.0, Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support and BUL–1347.2, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements)
8. Students must always behave lawfully and refrain from encouraging others to act unlawfully. (Refer to BUL–6231.0, Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support and BUL–5799.0 Threat Assessment and Management) Unlawful activities that can be conducted through social media includes (but is not limited to):
 - Threats
 - Drug sale
 - Gang activity and communications
 - Cheating and plagiarism
 - Forgery and falsification
 - Sexual harassment
 - Blackmail and extortion
 - Prejudice and hate crimes
9. Students shall take responsibility for helping to create a safe school environment on and offline by reporting bullying or hazing to a trusted District teacher or administrator. Students shall refrain from participating or contributing to cyber bullying, which is bullying through digital means such as via text, image, video, message, website post, social media activity, or other form of communication sent by an electronic device. [Refer to BUL– 5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy [Student-to-Student and Student-to- Adult], BUL–2047.0, Responding to and Reporting Hate-Motivated Incidents and Crimes, and BUL–3349.0, Sexual Harassment Policy (Student-to-Student, Adult-to-Student, and Student-to-Adult)]



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10. Students shall produce original work and not misrepresent the work of others as their own. Students must use materials covered by a copyright only with permission. File sharing software and sites that encourage the illegal downloading of media are forbidden. (Refer to BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems)

III. REESPONSIBILITIES OF DISTRICT STUDENTS

All District students are expected to:

- Adhere to this Social Media Policy for Students
- Be familiar with and follow the guidelines and the provisions of this policy.

IV. SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR SITE ADMINISTRATOR (S) RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Administrator/Designee should:

1. Distribute and communicate this Social Media Policy for Students to all employees.
2. Investigate reported incidents of employee or students' misconduct or violations of appropriate conduct. [Refer to BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) For District Computer Systems, BUL-5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy (Student-to-Student and Student-to-Adult) and other related District policies.]
3. Inappropriate postings may warrant additional reporting to School Operations and the appropriate reporting agency:
 - a. Threats (contact Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD), School Operations, and Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services).
 - b. Inappropriate or sexualized images of minors (contact law enforcement and LASPD),
 - c. Child pornography (contact law enforcement and LASPD Police),
 - d. Raise a reasonable suspicion of child abuse (contact Child Protective Services). [Refer to the attached Behavior Intervention Matrix, BUL- 1119.1, Organizing for Assessing and Managing Threats, and BUL- 1347.2, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements]
4. Inappropriate postings may be documented by taking and printing



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screen shots or downloading them for evidence. Evidence should be collected with the permission of the site administrator for the sole purpose of the investigative process and stored in a secured location. This evidence may be used in conference with the employee(s) or associated persons in question. Caution: Do not download or print images of minors or any content that may be considered child pornography. Law enforcement will gather evidence of child pornography, not a District employee.

5. Document all critical incidents on the Incident System Tracking Accountability Report (iSTAR).
6. The target of online harassment can request removal of objectionable postings by reporting the abuse to the Internet service provider or webmaster. Most social networking sites have the capacity to flag objectionable postings with “report abuse” button. The target should document the postings prior to their removal.
7. Monitor and follow-up to ensure that the inappropriate online behavior has stopped.

B. Staff should:

1. Share responsibility for modeling appropriate behavior and creating an online environment where mutual respect, tolerance, civility, and acceptance among students and staff are promoted.
2. Discuss all aspects of the Social Media Policy for Students before using social media for instructional purposes.
3. Monitor online learning platforms used in instructional activities.
4. Encourage students to report violations of the Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy and the Social Media Policy for Students.
5. Provide instruction to ensure that students are educated about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response and how to interact with others on social networking platforms (See BUL–999.9 Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy).
6. Report any complaints or incidents involving social media to the site administrator.



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- C. Educational Service Center Superintendent should:
 - 1. Communicate this Social Media Policy for Students to administrators, employees and associated persons.
 - 2. Designate administrators to ensure the implementation of this policy.
- D. Central Office Staff should:
 - 1. Support this policy by assisting schools and worksites via trainings, consultation, and distribution of resources.
 - 2. Align this policy with related District initiatives.
- V. GENERAL PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS
The following are general procedures for the administrator/supervisor to respond to any complaints:
 - A. Secure campus/office safety.
 - B. Assure involved parties that allegations and complaints are taken seriously.
 - C. Investigate.
 - D. Take action to stop the behavior.
 - E. Request a factual written statement from the involved parties, to include witnesses if available.
 - F. Consult with the Local District, Staff Relations and other offices, as appropriate.
 - G. Document actions taken.
 - H. Implement disciplinary action as needed.
 - I. If appropriate, the victim may file a criminal complaint with law enforcement.
 - J. Continue to monitor and address inappropriate behaviors.
 - K. If appropriate, complete the Incident System Tracking Accountability Report (iSTAR).



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- L. Information about allegations of misconduct or investigations should be handled within the confines of the District's reporting procedures and investigative process. The District will not tolerate retaliation against anyone for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint investigation process.

If the allegation is against one's administrator or supervisor, that person's supervisor shall respond to the complaint (see Attachment D, Workplace Violence Complaint Form).

AUTHORITY: This is a policy of the Superintendent of Schools.

RELATED RESOURCES: BUL-999.9, Responsible & Acceptable Use Policy (RAUP) For District Computer Systems, dated June 19, 2013

BUL-5212.1, Bullying and Hazing Policy (Student-to- Student and Student-to-Adult, dated September 17, 2012

BUL-5181.1, Policy Regarding Internet Safety for Students, dated May 1, 2012

BUL-6231.0, Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, dated February 14, 2014

BUL-1347.2, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements, dated July 1, 2011

BUL-5688.0, Social Media Policy for Employees and Associated Persons, dated February 1, 2012

BUL-5799.0, Threat Assessment and Management (Student-to-Student, Student-to-Adult), dated July 16, 2012

BUL-2469 Pupil Records: Access, Confidentiality, and Notice of Educational Rights, dated April 24, 2006

BUL-2047.0, Responding to and Reporting Hate-Motivated Incidents and Crimes, dated October 10, 2005

BUL-3349.0, Sexual Harassment Policy (Student-to-Student, Adult-to-Student, and Student-to-Adult), dated November 29, 2006

BUL-1119.1, Organizing for Assessing and Managing Threats, dated December 7, 2005



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ASSISTANCE: For assistance and information, please contact any of the following offices:

LAUSD Resources

Communications Office (213) 241-6766 - for assistance with obtaining approval to use district logos and general district communication

Crisis Counseling and Intervention Service, School Mental Health (213) 241-2174 or (213) 214-3841 - for assistance with threat assessment and mental health issues

Human Relations, Diversity and Equity (213) 241-5337 - for assistance with issues of bullying, cyber-bullying, conflict resolution, and diversity trainings

Information Technology (213) 214-4906 - for assistance with identifying and establishing appropriate educational websites and apps

Office of Curriculum, Instruction and School Support (213) 241-5333 - for assistance with instructional integration and other curricular matters

Los Angeles School Police Department (213) 625-6631 - for assistance with any law enforcement matters

Office of General Counsel (213) 241-7600 - for assistance/consultation regarding legal issues

School Operations Division (213) 241-5337 - for assistance in school operations and procedures concerning students and employees



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Example of Student Behavior	Discipline Reason	Matrix for Student Suspension & Expulsion	Category of Principal Response
<p><u>Cyber-bullying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posting a burn page on the internet that targets a student or group of students resulting in emotional or physical harm. Knowingly creating a credible impersonation of another student without that student’s consent with the purpose or having the effect of bullying. Creating a false profile of a fake student or creating a false profile using the likeness of an actual student, with the purpose or having the effect of bullying. 	<p>3.21a 3.21b 3.21c 3.21d 3.21e</p>	<p>Engaged in an act of bullying, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of electronic act directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel. E.C. 48900®; 48915€</p>	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) due to the nature of the act, the student’s presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>
<p><u>Stole and/or damage of the device.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaging a device owned by the school or another student or staff member. 	<p>3.4 3.5 3.10</p>	<p>Caused or attempted to cause damage to school or private property. E.C. 48900(f), 48915 (E)</p> <p>Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property. E.C. 48900(g); 48915(e)</p> <p>Knowingly received stolen school or private property, E.C. 48900(l); 48915(e)</p>	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student’s presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>



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Example of Student Behavior	LAUSD MAX Event Code	Matrix for Student Suspension & Expulsion	Category of Principal Response
<p><u>Threat/Harassment</u> Student uses the device to threaten or harass another student</p>	3.1c	Threatened to cause physical injury to another person. E.C. 48900 (a)(1), 48915 (b)	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p>
	3.12	Engaged in harassments, threats, or intimidation against a pupil or group of pupils or school district personnel. E.C. 48900.4**, 48915(e) (grades 4-12)	<p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student's presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>
<p><u>Terroristic Threat</u> Student uses the device to make a terroristic threat against a school official or school property.</p>	3.15	Made terrorist threats against school officials or school property, or both E.C. 48900.7; 48915 (e)	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student's presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>



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Example of Student Behavior	LAUS DMAX Event Code	Matrix for Student Suspension & Expulsion	Category of Principal Response
<p><u>Disrupting school-wide activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the device to cause disruption to instruction or educational activities, or causes interference with the rights of students and school personnel. 	3.09	Disrupted school-wide activities (issued by an administrator)	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student’s presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>
<p><u>Student uses the device to commit an obscene act.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending, asking to receive, or making available to viewers in any capacity, pictures, or videos of people who are partially or completely undressed, or are pretending to or actually performing sexual acts. 	3.7	Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity E.C. 48900(i), 48915 (e)	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student’s presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>
<p><u>Student uses the device to sexually harass another student</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending, asking to receive, or making available to viewers in any capacity, pictures, or videos of people who are partially or completely undressed, or are pretending to or actually performing sexual acts. 	3.13	Engaged in sexual harassment E.C. 48900.2**; 48915 (e) (grades 4-12)	<p><u>Category III:</u> Student offenses with broad principal discretion.</p> <p>A suspension, including in-school and class, shall be imposed only when interventions have failed to bring proper conduct and/or safety is a risk.</p> <p>For an expulsion, a school must provide evidence of one or both of the following additional findings: (1) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. (2) Due to the nature of the act, the student’s presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.</p>