

## **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

In accordance with GAB/IIBEA, Acceptable Computer System Use Policy, IIBD-A Network and Telecommunications Services Acceptable Use and the Technology User Plan, Wythe County Public Schools provides a computer system for technological communications, including the Internet, to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. Wythe County Public Schools has no legal responsibility for content of or to regulate/review off-campus Internet activity or e-communications. Internet activity is defined as blogs, IM, Chat social networks and Web sites including but not limited to Facebook, Flickr, LinkedIn, MySpace, Second Life, Twitter, Wikis, online forums, virtual worlds, YouTube, Chat Room, other emerging sites. E-communication acts of employees are defined as texting and/or IM. However, WCPS reserves the right to discipline employees for actions taken off-campus, which would violate the aforementioned policy and plan stipulations if occurring on-site, if such actions adversely affect the safety, well-being or performance of students while in school, on school buses, at school activities or coming to and from school; if such actions threaten violence against a student or employee, if such actions violate local, state or federal law, or School Board policies or regulations, or if such actions disrupt the learning environment, administration, or orderly conduct of the school.

Employees will be held responsible for their disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party. When information is posted on the Internet, it is posted for public display. As such, the WCPS employee has no expectation of privacy for any information he posts on the Internet. Consequently, the division may take disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal, for employee off-campus Internet and/or e-communication activities which are inconsistent with the professional and ethical standards expected of WCPS employees. In accordance with GCPD Professional Staff Discipline and GCPF Suspension of Staff Members, the division may take disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal, for employee off-campus Internet and e-communication activities.

Given the aforementioned standards, the following guidelines must be followed:

### **E-Communications:**

Unless the WCPS employee is the parent\* or guardian of the WCPS student(s) receiving the text message, IM or e-communication, the WCPS employee will not text, IM or otherwise e-communicate with a WCPS student without the expressed prior written consent\*\* of the student's parent\* or guardian. The expressed prior written consent\*\* must be witnessed by the WCPS employee's supervisor and a copy maintained in the student's educational record.

### **Student Social Media:**

Unless the WCPS employee is the parent\* or guardian of the WCPS student(s) having access to the social media account, no WCPS employee will “friend” or otherwise allow any access to a WCPS employee’s social media/Internet account without the expressed prior written consent\*\* of the student’s parent\* or guardian. The expressed prior written consent\*\* must be witnessed by the WCPS employee’s supervisor and a copy maintained in the student’s educational record. However even with expressed prior written parental consent\*\*, at no time will a WCPS employee provide any student specific information utilizing a social media account.

### **Student(s) Picture, Likeness or Video:**

Excluding WCPS’ website, unless the WCPS employee is the parent\* or guardian of the WCPS student(s) whose picture, likeness or video is being uploaded and/or posted on the Internet by the employee, the employee will not upload a picture, likeness or video of a student(s) without the expressed prior written consent\*\* of the student’s parent\* or guardian and the employee’s supervisor. The expressed prior written consent\*\* of the parent\* or guardian must be witnessed by the WCPS employee’s supervisor and a copy maintained in the student’s educational record.

### **Picture, Likeness or Video:**

Excluding WCPS’ website, no WCPS employee will upload or post a picture, likeness or video with direct or inadvertent content related to any or all facets of WCPS including but not limited to staff and/or any or all WCPS’ sponsored programs and activities on the Internet without the expressed prior written consent of the employee’s supervisor.

### **Student Information:**

As required by applicable state and federal regulations, student information must be protected and only disclosed to certain parties for certain purposes. Consequently no WCPS employee will communicate information concerning any specific student enrolled in WCPS using a social media network to anyone including but not limited to other WCPS employees, parent(s)/adult students, students, private vendors, other agencies’ staff, or the public.

### **E-Mail Content:**

Any e-mail message that contains a student’s name or otherwise identifies a student may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom on Information Act. Therefore a copy of the e-mail must be maintained in the student’s record and is subject to review by WCPS staff, the student’s parent(s) and/or the adult student.

If more than one student is named or otherwise identified in the e-mail, the content must be redacted to reflect single names or identified students and a copy of the e-mail must be placed in all named/identified students' files.

### **Division Social Media:**

► If a WCPS employee is participating in Internet social media activities in a professional capacity i.e., for school division related purposes, the employee must:

- obtain the prior approval of his supervisor,
- identify himself and his position with the division,
- realize information becomes public the moment it is published on the Internet. (Using a District E-mail address and/or equipment renders his actions public and creates a public record.),
- represent the division's position rather than the his position,
- ensure accuracy of content, and
- communicate the information professionally by checking for spelling and grammatical errors and correcting any errors prior to submitting the information.

► No WCPS employee may act as a spokesperson for the division or post comments for or on behalf of the Division, except as authorized by the Superintendent or his designee. Additionally, no WCPS employee may use or post a District or School logo or communicate any proprietary information on any social media site without the permission of the Superintendent, school principal, or designee.

\*Parent includes any biological, adoptive, foster or surrogate parent for whom parental rights have not been terminated in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

\*\*Should one parent\* come forward and object to providing the necessary expressed written consent detailed in this document, the division will not respond as if consent has been granted unless and until both parents\* provide expressed written consent.

**Wythe County Public Schools**

**Parental Consent for Social Media**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

The above identified Wythe County Public Schools employee has my/our consent to communicate electronically with my/our minor child, \_\_\_\_\_, through the following media:

- Cell phone (verbal)
- Cell phone (text)
- E-mail
- Social Media sites  
(specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- Instant messaging
- Blogs  
(specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- Web Sites  
(specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other  
(specify \_\_\_\_\_)

I have received a copy of, and understand the Wythe County Public Schools Social Media Guidelines. This consent is valid only for the remainder of the school year in which it is signed.

Parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***This form must be witnessed and signed by the employee's supervisor and a copy placed in the student's educational record. Consent may be withdrawn at any time by either parent/legal guardian.***