

## **Social Media Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Zion Lutheran School**

#### Introduction

Zion Lutheran School recognizes that access to technology in school gives students, parents and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, this **Acceptable Use Policy** outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow with regard to the use of social media when connected to Zion Lutheran School and its programs.

- Students, parents and teachers are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of social media can result in disciplinary action.
- Zion Lutheran School makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of social media technologies.

We encourage teachers, students, staff, and other school community members to use social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate educational content, and enhance the classroom experience. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

We've created these social networking/media guidelines for you to follow when representing or communicating with or about Zion Lutheran School, its teachers, students, and school families in the virtual world. We expect students, teachers, parents and the school family to follow these guidelines whenever they are utilizing websites and social media sites associated with the school, as well as whenever you are communicating with or discussing the school on social media.

Please do the following:

#### **Use good judgment**

- We expect you to use good, ethical judgment in all situations.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all the information you

have shared on your social network is public information.

### **Be respectful**

- Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.

### **Be responsible and ethical**

- If you are approved to represent the school, unless you are specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the school as a spokesperson, you should state that the views expressed in your postings, etc. are your own. Stick with discussing school-related matters that are within your area of responsibility.
- Be open about your affiliation with the school and the role/position you hold.

### **Be a good listener**

- Keep in mind that one of the biggest benefits of social media is that it gives others another way to talk to you, ask questions directly and to share feedback.
- Be responsive to others when conversing online. Provide answers, thank people for their comments, and ask for further feedback, etc.
- Always be doing at least as much listening and responding as you do "talking."

Don't share the following:

### **Confidential information**

- Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online "conversations" are never private. Do not use your birth date, address, and cell phone number on any public website.

### **Private and personal information**

- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.
- NEVER give out or transmit personal information of students, parents, or co-workers
- Don't take information you may receive through social networking and assume it's the most up-to-date or correct.
- Always respect the privacy of the school community members.

Please be cautious with respect to:

### Images

- Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school (if applicable).
- You may use photos and video (products, etc.) that are available on the school's website.
- It is generally not acceptable to post pictures of students without the expressed written consent of their parents.
- Do not post pictures of others (students, teachers, school family, etc.) without permission.

### Other sites

- A significant part of the interaction on blogs, Twitter, Facebook and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or linking to helpful resources. However, the school is ultimately responsible for any content that is shared. Don't blindly repost a link without looking at the content first.
- Pay attention to the security warnings that pop up on your computer before clicking on unfamiliar links. They actually serve a purpose and protect you and the school.
- When using Twitter, Facebook and other tools, be sure to follow their printed terms and conditions.

### And if you don't get it right...

- Be sure to correct any mistake you make immediately, and make it clear what you've done to fix it.
- Apologize for the mistake if the situation warrants it.
- If it's a MAJOR mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so the school can take the proper steps to help minimize the impact it may have.

### Netiquette

- Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Users should also recognize that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.
- Users should also remember **not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see**. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be

shared and spread in ways you never intended.

### **Personal Safety**

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

- Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.
- Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

When posting online in any way about the school, make only positive comments. Social media is not the appropriate place to take your grievances or concerns about school matters, teachers, students, or school families. Concerns should be brought personally to the teacher, principal, or school representative. Complaints about teachers, students, classrooms, or the school should not appear on social media. Posting complains or negative comments about others is neither constructive nor kind, and is a form of harassment.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges, or possible termination of enrollment. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others.

## **Social Media Policy Agreement**

### **Examples of Acceptable Use**

I will:

- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat social media carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening/bullying, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using social media

### **Examples of Unacceptable Use**

I will not:

- Use social media in a way that could be personally or physically harmful to myself or others.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others-staff, students, school families, etc.
- Use social media to speak negatively about Zion Lutheran School, students, teachers, or school family members, but instead follow appropriate protocols when addressing grievances or concerns.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom and school family.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using social media.

### **Limitation of Liability**

Zion Lutheran School will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

### **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of volunteer privileges
- Removal from positions of leadership within the school.
- Removal of student from enrollment.
- Additional consequences determined by the administration.

I have read and understood this Acceptable Use Policy and agree to abide by it:

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

