

<b>STAFF SOCIAL MEDIA USE</b>		<b>File: GCSB</b>
<b>Section G: Personnel</b>	<b>Adopted: August 4, 2022</b>	<b>Last Revised: August 4, 2022</b>

1. What is Social Media?

The term social media refers to **computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities**. Social media is internet-based and gives users quick electronic communication of content, such as personal information, documents, videos, and photos.

For the purpose of this policy, social media includes but is not limited to the following examples: instant messages, images, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest, Tik-Tok, Linked-In, Slack, Blogs, Podcasts, Wikis, Forums, etc.

2. Personal Responsibility

MECDHH supports the appropriate use of social media both personally and, if authorized on behalf of the school (e.g. sharing of job posts or activities for D/HOH students hosted by MECDHH/GBSD). Individuals are personally responsible for what is said and posted online, and are expected to use good judgment and act in a respectful manner. Please keep in mind that you are an ambassador for MECDHH.

3. Personal Use of Social Media is defined as non-work related social media activity (e.g., MECDHH employees using a Facebook registered under their personal email address).

- a. Personal communications made via social media are not exempt from the laws and regulations that govern personal liability.
- b. Personal postings/comments/messages should not indicate that you are speaking on behalf of MECDHH/GBSD.
- c. MECDHH/GBSD strongly encourages staff with personal online social media accounts to be mindful of the information posted; online behavior should remain respectful of the families and populations that we serve and partner with. Please note that deleted personal information may still be stored on websites and information may be visible to internet providers depending on the connections used. You are responsible for what you post on your own pages and on the pages of others.
- d. Employees may, on occasion, engage in incidental personal use of social media in the workplace as long as such use does not consume significant time or resources, interfere with operations and productivity, or violate district or department policies.
- e. If staff wish to post any personal content (ex. classes, events etc.) on organization pages please send to the social media team or content managers for approval and distribution to accounts.

4. Training

- a. The Executive Director is responsible for communicating the contents of this policy to staff annually.

5. Terms of Use

- a. Content will be posted solely by content managers and the Executive Director.
- b. Any concerns regarding content posted can be brought to the social media content managers, social media team, HR or Executive Director at any time.
- c. Reacting to/commenting on social media posts on official MECDHH pages and accounts: MECDHH/GBSD staff who are using their personal social media accounts to react to or comment on posts on official MECDHH/GBSD social media will remain professional and appropriate at all times.
- d. Social media content managers will:

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- i. Be appointed annually by stipend postings and leadership team decisions.
- ii. Meet with the social media team at least once a month, more as needed to discuss policy, content decisions, etc. and respect posting schedule and decision-making flowchart as developed by the team.
- iii. Remain culturally sensitive when composing or reposting content, with sensitivity to diversity, race, gender, and other individual differences; recognizing the value of diverse perspectives and experiences.
- iv. Monitor Deaf culture dates/events/news, and attend campus-sponsored and affiliated events to capture original content and visuals for use in creating social media posts.
- v. Utilize content distributed by the team, collected from all departments.
- vi. Monitor social media sites, coordinating responses to inquiries, messages, and comments, enforcing published participation guidelines, and reporting issues to the Executive Director. Occasional availability after hours and on weekends is required in cases of emergency or a need for a rapid response.

6. Confidential Information

- a. Content will at all times comply with school rules, respective media source guidelines, state laws, and federal laws (including confidentiality laws).
  - i. At no time shall personal information, images, or whereabouts of a student or employee be shared on MECDHH/GBSD social media unless a current photo/video release form has been signed.
  - ii. Do not share images or information regarding the specific whereabouts of a student or employee even if a release has been signed.
  - iii. Employees are held responsible for privacy violations and are subject to organization, state, and federal consequences, depending on the offense.

7. Violations

- a. MECDHH staff are prohibited from initiating a friend/add/follow request to students or families.
- b. MECDHH staff are prohibited from being friends/following etc. any student under the age of 22 on any social media outlets.
- c. Any inappropriate use or policy violations related to social media shall be reported to HR and/or the Executive Director.
- d. Violations of this policy may result in legal action, and/or disciplinary action, depending on the circumstance, as decided by the Executive Director, the Department of Education, and/or law enforcement.

8. Exemptions:

The following exemptions apply:

- a. If a family or former student is over the age of 22, AND they initiated the friend/add/follow request to staff; staff are permitted to accept the request at their discretion as long as they are personally no longer serving that family.
- b. Staff that are related to families MECDHH/GBSD serves.
- c. Staff that were already friends with families prior to them being served by MECDHH/GBSD.
- d. Staff that are involved in groups with families outside of MECDHH/GBSD (for example, a staff member may have a child who is on the same swim team as a sibling of a family served by MECDHH/GBSD).

MECDHH/GBSD Policy & Procedure

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For any questions regarding additional exemptions to the social media policy, staff will communicate with the Executive Director.

9. Posting During a Crisis

- a. In the event of a crisis, MECDHH/GBSD will NOT alert staff via social media. They will first report to appropriate parties (ex. law enforcement, maintenance, Executive Director etc. depending on circumstance) and if still necessary to alert others; use other forms of direct communication including email or phone.
- b. If there is an on-going situation in which information has not been fact-checked, avoid posting regarding the situation. Social media posts often add to the chaos and panic of an event.
- c. If there is a situation regarding the safety and welfare of children or staff, MECDHH will contact the appropriate authorities. Use your best judgment regarding situations of crisis and report accordingly. Individual staff who are mandated reporters should report their concerns to DHHS and their supervisor.

10. Use of the logo

- a. MECDHH/GBSD's logo may only be used in a professional capacity. Special permission from HR and/or social media team must be gained if using the logo on a personal social media account by an individual employee. The logo must not be altered in any way.

Cross-Reference:       GBEBB – Staff Conduct with Students  
                              GCSA – Staff Computer and Internet Use  
                              JRA – Student Education Records and Information

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