

**Employee Technology and Social Media Use**  
**WVDE Policy 2460 Policy Regarding Electronic Resources, Technologies and the Internet**

**Educator, Service Personnel and Staff Responsibilities:**

5.8.a. Collaboration, resource sharing, and student/teacher, student/student, and teacher/parent dialogue can all be facilitated by the use of social media (such as Facebook, My Space, Twitter, etc.) and other electronic communication. Such interactivity outside of the school walls can greatly enhance face-to-face classes. However, it is imperative that a clear line be drawn between personal social networking and professional/educational networking to protect the safety of the students and the integrity of educational professionals and service staff.

5.8.b. In order to assist educators in maintaining a professional relationship with students and to avoid situations that could lead to inappropriate relationships between school personnel and students, the following regulations apply to all school personnel in public schools and RESAs and to employees of the WVBE and WVDE. Failure to adhere to these regulations may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of licensure:

5.8.b.1. School personnel will maintain a professional relationship with all school students, both inside and outside the classroom and while using any form of social media and other electronic communication. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: committing any act of harassment as defined by WVBE and/or district policy; committing or soliciting any sexual act from any minor or any student regardless of age; soliciting, encouraging, or consummating a romantic or inappropriate relationship with a student, regardless of the age of the student; using inappropriate language including, but not limited to, swearing and improper sexual comments; taking inappropriate pictures (digital, photographic or video) of students or exchanging any inappropriate pictures with students; or engaging in any other behavior that constitutes a violation of district or county policy or that is detrimental to the health and welfare of students.

5.8.b.2. The viewing, storing, transmission or downloading of pornography or sexually suggestive or sexually explicit material or text on a work computer or other electronic storage or communication device, whether at home or at work, by school personnel or anyone else to whom the school personnel has made the computer or other electronic storage or communication device available, is prohibited. This same prohibition applies to a personal computer or other electronic storage or communication device while at school or a school activity.

5.8.b.3. All information stored within work computers or servers is the property of the state, county or school, and the personnel using such computers/servers/networks have no expectation of privacy with respect to its contents.

5.8.c. With appropriate professional development, educators will promote and model acceptable use, digital citizenship and online responsibility to support personalized learning and digital-age assessments to meet the educational learning policies, including Policy 2520.14, for all students.

5.8.d. Teachers, specialists, and other supervising adults will teach and discuss the appropriate use of electronic resources, technologies and the Internet with their students, monitor their use, and intervene if the uses are not acceptable.

5.8.e. School personnel who receive information via any electronic resource, including a social networking site, that falls under the mandatory reporting requirements of W. Va. Code § 49-6A-2, must report as indicated in W. Va. Code.

5.8.f. Staff members should be careful not to use copyrighted material in a manner that violates copyright law.

5.8.g. School personnel are responsible for protecting their passwords associated with their computers and e-mail address and must not make them accessible to others.

**Taylor County Schools Directive**

**Guidelines for the use of Social Media by Taylor County School Board employees:**

While the Board respects its employees' First Amendment rights, those rights do not include permission to post inflammatory comments that could compromise the County's mission, undermine staff relationships, or cause a substantial disruption to the school environment. This warning includes staff members' online conduct that occurs off school property including from the employee's private computer.

- Do not accept or initiate "friendships" with students on personal social networking sites.
- Post only what you want the world to see. Once you post something, it may be available forever.
- Do not discuss students or coworkers.
- Visit your profile's security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to "only friends".