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507 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Spero Academy understands the value of social networking and social media. Social Media takes many forms including websites, blogs, file sharing sites, forums, etc. These platforms provide an effective way of marketing our school and expanding our interactions with employees, vendors, and families.

Embracing the open and public nature of Social Media while adapting to new and changing technology is necessary in order to provide our students, families, and educators with the best and most current tools for communication and information. The interactive public environment created by social media makes it highly important for all stakeholders within the Spero Community to engage in social networking in a responsible manner.

The purpose of this policy is to support employee, student, and family use of social media by providing guidelines for acceptable use of professional social media, interaction with Spero Academy organizational social media, and best practices for the use of personal social media where it may impact Spero Academy, its staff, or students.

I. DEFINITIONS

A. Social Media:

Social Media generally refers to websites or phone apps where a profile is created and available to be viewed by either the public or a selected list of individuals. Several examples of social media sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat,

B. Personal Social Media:

Social media that is created, maintained, and used by an employee for personal use (such as Facebook or Twitter).

C. Professional Social Media:

Social media that is created, maintained and used by an employee for professional use (such as LinkedIn).

D. Organizational Social Media:

Social media that is created, maintained, and used by a Spero Academy authorized person to represent the school as an entity.

E. Exclusions:

Not all online based activities are considered social media. Generally speaking, if there is no creation of a “profile” or account, and there is nothing being shared with either the public or a select group of individuals, it is not covered under this policy.

II. APPLICATION OF OTHER POLICIES

A. Be aware that all existing policies and behavior guidelines extend to Spero Academy related activities in the online environment, as well as on school premises. Spero Academy participants should become well-versed with the following policies:

1. Spero Academy Parent Student Handbook
2. Employee Handbook
3. Acceptable Use Policy

III. GENERAL CONDUCT FOR PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- A. Social networking sites should not be considered private. Generally, information posted on social networking sites is public and employees should expect that even with the use of certain privacy settings, what is posted on social networking sites will be seen by others and should not be considered private.
- B. Social media sites should not be used during work times unless for business related activities. Spero Academy may monitor social media communications to ensure compliance with School policies.
- C. Employees are responsible for the content employees publish on social media sites. As a representative of Spero Academy, employees should always consider how their comments will be viewed in light of protecting and enhancing both Spero Academy’s reputation and their own.
- D. Be respectful to fellow employees, students, parents, vendors and competitors. Do not post negative or disparaging comments about Spero Academy or its services, products, management, or employees. Social media sites should not be used as a platform for employee disputes or other internal school matters. Employees may be disciplined or held legally liable for any actions that are unlawful or for information posted that may be defamatory, proprietary, confidential, harassing, pornographic or create a hostile work environment.

- E. Social media can be productive and beneficial both personally and professionally, however, employees of Spero Academy must ensure that this personal activity does not interfere with work activities.

IV. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- A. It is best practice to review the privacy and security settings to understand how much information is being shared with any particular social media platform.
- B. In posting on personal social media platforms, Spero Academy employees agree to not:
 - 1. Connect (friend, follow, etc.) to social media profiles of current or former students of Spero Academy until they reach the age of 18.
 - 2. Speak on behalf of Spero Academy or represent employees in a manner that may lead readers to believe that employees are speaking on behalf of Spero Academy.
 - 3. Engage parents, students or the community as a representative of Spero Academy.
 - 4. Post images, videos, audio files, names, or any other potentially identifying material about students.
 - 5. Use it as an official platform to communicate with teachers or students, such as weekly newsletters and other school announcements or notifications.
 - 6. Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, employees, parents, volunteers, or any other person related to Spero Academy.
 - 7. Post material that is threatening, illegal, harassing, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards any Spero Academy individual or entity.
 - 8. Post material that infringes on the rights or privacy of any individual associated with Spero Academy.
 - 9. Share or disclose confidential or proprietary information of Spero Academy, or its students, families, vendors and employees.
 - 10. Use their Spero Academy email to create personal social media profiles.
 - 11. Use Spero Academy copyrighted or proprietary logos with the exception of choosing to “repost” a social media post from an Organizational Social Media Site or to link to the website to promote the school (such as during fundraising drives).

12. Post comments under multiple names, alias or false identity regarding Spero Academy or any person associated with Spero Academy.

V. PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- A. Employees may decide to include information about their employment at Spero Academy as part of their personal social media profile. This may include:
 1. Listing Spero Academy as their current employer
 2. Updates regarding their job title at Spero Academy
- B. Using a social media platform to communicate with parents or the community is subject to approval by the Executive Director.
- C. In posting on professional social media sites, Spero Academy employees agree to not:
 1. Speak on behalf of Spero Academy or represent employees in a manner which may lead readers to believe that employees are speaking on behalf of Spero Academy.
 2. Post images, videos, audio files, names, or any other potentially identifying material about students without the express consent of the Director and with strict adherence to the general guidelines of this policy as stated in the Organizational Social Media Use section below.
 3. Use it as an official platform to communicate with teachers or students, such as weekly newsletters and other school announcements or notifications unless given prior consent by the Director.
 4. Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, employees, parents, volunteers, or any other person related to Spero Academy.
 5. Post material that the Director determines is threatening, illegal, harassing, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards a Spero Academy individual or entity.
 6. Post material that infringes on the rights or privacy of any individual associated with Spero Academy.
 7. Share or disclose confidential or proprietary information of Spero Academy, or its students, families, vendors and employees.
 8. Post comments under multiple names, an alias or false identity regarding Spero Academy or any person associated with Spero Academy.

9. Make defamatory statements about Spero Academy, its employees, its students or their families, or other members of the Spero Academy community.
10. Disclose any confidential information of the school or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individuals or organizations, including students and/or their families.
11. Participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumors or false information.

D. Additional Usage Guidelines:

1. Where no policy or written guidelines exist, employees should use professional judgment and act appropriately. Employees should seek guidance from the Executive Director when uncertain as to acceptable practices.
2. Any statement regarding Spero Academy, its participants, or members of the greater Spero Academy community is subject to inspection.

E. Spero Academy reserves the right to undertake any or all of the following:

1. View and monitor an employee's publicly viewable profile, website, or blog at any time without an employee's consent or previous approval or knowledge.
2. Request that profiles be removed, shut down, or disassociated from Spero Academy.
3. Remove or request that employees edit postings, photos, videos, audio, data files or comments at any time, whether or not they violate this Policy.
4. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action including possible loss of employment.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

A. All official Spero Academy social media profiles must be approved by the Executive Director and contents should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Logos and graphics used on the site must be consistent with the branding standards and usage guidelines of the school.
2. Site administrators must have the capability to immediately delete or remove any posting or publication that may be inappropriate, or offensive to Spero Academy and the community.

3. Posting of photos, video, audio files, and comments must conform to the general guidelines of this policy as stated below.
4. Passwords should be kept by the Executive Director, the Program Coordinator, and one other administrator. Notifications should be set up in the social media profile for at least two people to be informed if the password has been changed. The Executive Director, the Program Coordinator, and the one other administrator should know how to remove the profile from the internet.
5. Spero Academy's social media pages shall be used as a supplemental means of dispersing important information and announcements with the Spero Community. It shall not replace other official lines of communication to parents and employees.

B. Posting Photos, Videos and Audio Files

1. For the protection and safety of all participants in the Spero Academy community, those using Spero Academy social media sites should never identify pictures using a student's name. Student identity must be protected and identification by face recognition should be avoided (Group activity pictures are acceptable). Pictures of children, who are recognizable by face, require a written authorization Media Release Form to be signed by the child's parent, or legal guardian.
2. Photos, videos, and audio files that may defame, damage, degrade, or harm any individual, group, or entity, including, but not limited to, the presence or mention of alcohol, drugs, smoking, illegal behavior or any content deemed inappropriate for the Spero Academy school community are a violation of these guidelines and will be removed.
3. If a student, parent, employee, or visitor chooses to post and label or "tag" a child's name in association with a photo, video, or audio file, steps should be taken to remove or block these tags immediately. Any security measures that prevent this activity should be taken.

Legal References:

15 USC § 6501 et seq. (Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act)

17 USC § 101 et seq. (Copyrights)

20 USC § 6751 et seq. (Enhancing Education through Technology Act of 2001)

47 USC § 254 (Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2009 [CIPA])

47 CFR § 54.520 (FCC Rules Implementing CIPA)

Minn. Stat. §125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)

Minn. Stat. §125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)

Cross References:

Spero Academy Policy 121A.031 – Student Bullying Policy

Spero Academy Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence

Spero Academy Policy 515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

Spero Academy Policy 524 – Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Spero Academy Policy 526 – Hazing Prohibition