

Social Media 4035

The Meriden Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy, its implementing regulations or its enforcement is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media or personal online accounts under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' use of personal online accounts, will not be a legal or policy issue. However, the Board will regulate disruptive communications and/or actions by members of the school community when school officials determine that such communications or actions:

1. cause legally sufficient interference with, disruption to, or undermining of the effective operation of the Meriden Public Schools (the “District”) or a school or program operated by the District such that regulation of such communications comports with the First Amendment and other applicable laws;
2. are used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory, threatening, or similarly inappropriate communications (e.g., when such speech relates to a matter of public concern and its disruptive impact outweighs the importance of the speech);
3. create a hostile work environment;
4. breach confidentiality obligations of Board employees; and/or
5. violate the law, Board policies, and/or other school rules or regulations.

Employees' use of social media on behalf of the District will be addressed as speech pursuant to duty under applicable First Amendment principles.

The Board, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal References:

U.S. Constitution, Amend. I

Pickering v. Board of Education, 391 U.S. 563 (1968)

Connick v. Myers, 461 U.S. 138 (1983)

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006)

Lindke v. Freed, 601 U.S. 187 (2024)

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 5, 6

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-40x

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51q

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183

ADOPTED:April 7, 2026

REVISED:April 7, 2026

Approved 4/7/2026

Previous Policy Number: