

Meeting Date: March 8, 2021
Type of Item: Policy Revision Review
Subject: Social Media Policy
Presented by: Katie Auman
Recommendation: Review and adopt policy revision

## Background

In February, Katie Auman and Audrey Glasebrook reviewed the District's existing Social Media Policy (4.6) for accuracy and relevance, and to determine whether changes were required to improve the effectiveness of and/or to clarify the policy. This policy was last reviewed and adopted in March 2011. The result of the review process is a comprehensive rewrite of the existing policy to bring it up to date with current social media practices and to reflect the library's use of social media platforms in communications and customer service.

## The Process

- Consulted various resources for social media policy best practices including:
  - ALA's Intellectual Freedom Office
  - Social Media Examiner
  - Public Relations Society of America
  - Society for Human Resource Management
  - National Labor Relations Board
- Visited 36 public library websites for social media policy comparisons. Of these libraries, only 18 had their social media policy available to the public on their website.
- Compared best practices and 18 public library social media policies to the District's existing social media policy to identify areas for improvement.

## Policy Revisions

Based on our research and comparisons, it was clear that the existing social media policy would need to be updated with the following information to make sure it reflected current social media practices and behaviors on those platforms, the Library's mission statement, and also addressed staff use of personal social media accounts.

1. The District's intent in using social media, its purpose and scope
2. Acceptable and unacceptable user behaviors and consequences
3. Privacy and personal information
4. Responsibilities for District's social media accounts
5. Staff personal social media accounts
6. Disclaimers

## Recommendation

*Adopt revised policy.* The Communications team hopes that the Board of Trustees members will review and adopt the revised social media policy for the District.

*Poudre River Public Library District Policies*

**4.6 Social Media**

REVISION DRAFT 2-25-21

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This policy is designed to ensure the proper use of the District’s social media by library staff, customers, and the public.

Poudre River Public Library District uses and encourages the use of multiple social media platforms to reach new audiences, engage with users more effectively, and enhance services by allowing greater interaction and feedback. The District provides online spaces that offer an extension of library services and resources to connect users to “knowledge, innovation, and enjoyment.”

The District welcomes public comments, posts, and messages on our social media networks. However, the District’s social media sites are not intended to be traditional public forums for the general exchange of ideas and viewpoints but a limited forum for discussing library programs, services, events, and resources.

**Rules for Commenting and Posting**

The District does not discriminate against any views but does reserve the right to monitor content before or after it is posted to District-owned social media sites and accounts. The District reserves the right to edit or remove any messages or postings that it deems, in its sole discretion, to be inappropriate or in violation of the District’s Behavior Policy.

Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Copyright and/or intellectual property rights violations
- Off topic or disruptive comments
- Obscene posts
- Abusive or defamatory language and/or personal attacks
- Hateful or racist comments
- Libelous comments
- Misleading or unfounded information
- Comments promoting or perpetuating discrimination toward any person or group
- Commercial promotion or spam, advertising, or solicitation
- Specific and implied threats
- Endorsements of illegal behavior or activity
- Personal info such as email addresses, telephone numbers, mailing addresses, or ID numbers

Additionally, the District reserves the right to terminate a person's ability to post, comment, or otherwise participate in the District's social media tools when the person has repeatedly posted any of the above listed inappropriate content.

Individuals are responsible for the content of their comments. By choosing to comment or post content on any social media site managed by the District, individuals agree to indemnify the District and its officers and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred by, arising out of, or related to the posted content.

Content posted to the Library District social media sites are subject to public disclosure and the Open Records Act.

### **Privacy**

The District does not collect, maintain or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party site (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) in any way other than to communicate with users on that site. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

### **Responsibility for Social Media**

The Library District is represented through official social media channels created by the Communications Department to maintain a clear and consistent message. The Communications Department has responsibility for information posted on District-owned social media accounts. As such, District staff is not authorized to create new social media channels on behalf of the Library District.

The Communications Departments grants access and authority to employees to post, comment, and share under the profile of the District.

### **Personal Social Media Accounts**

District employees often possess personal social media accounts. The District makes a distinction between personal and organizational accounts. Views expressed by the personal accounts of Library staff members do not represent the views of Poudre River Public Library District and do not serve as an official communication.

Just as with District social media accounts, District employees using personal social media accounts may not disclose any sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about the District. Individuals may be recognized as District employees and the comments could reflect on the organization.

Staff members may not:

- Use the Library District logo for profile images in social media, except in cases where the social media site (e.g., LinkedIn) automatically pulls the logo to associate it with employment in a personal profile.

- Use personal online identities and accounts to represent the Library District in an official capacity. Due to the difficulty in separating official and individual personas online, library staff should be cautious to avoid representing the District inappropriately to the public.

The District takes no action regarding employee comments on personal social media accounts that come to their attention unless there has been a violation in the areas described above or in employee performance and conduct as outlined in the District's HR Policy Manual. Under Colorado law (CRS Sec. 24-34-402.5), it is discriminatory to terminate an employee who is engaging in any lawful activity off the premises during nonworking hours unless the restriction relates to a bona fide occupational requirement or is reasonably related to the employment activities and responsibilities of a particular employee or group of employees.

### **Disclaimer**

While the District makes reasonable efforts to monitor the content of its digital and social media sites, the District is not responsible for the content of any external comment or post, and expressly disclaims any liability for external comments and posts.

### **Please Note**

Comments posted within Poudre River Public Library District social media sites will not be considered as official requests for information or action. Official correspondence and requests will be received through the Library District at 301 E. Olive St, Fort Collins, CO 80524.