

(School Name)
Social Networking By Student-Athletes
and Co-curricular Participants
2013-2014

In the past, inappropriate use of social media by (school name) students participating in athletics and other co-curricular activities has resulted in the suspension from practices, games and other events. In an effort to foster good sportsmanship and to deter the need to enforce such discipline, (school name) recommends the following guidelines as best practices for the use of social media by (school name) students. For the purposes of these guidelines, social media means any form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content, including, by way of illustration and not limitation, social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr.

(School name) respects the right of its students to use social media. However, it is important for (school name) students to understand the need to exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior and to understand that what may seem private in the digital world can often become public, even without knowledge or consent. (School name) students who use social media must remember that any information posted reflects on the entire (school name) community and, as such, is subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the (school name) Student-Athlete and Parent Handbook; the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Rules and Regulations; District Board Policies; and state and federal law.

BEST PRACTICE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE:

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for (school name) students to conduct themselves safely and responsibly in an online environment. As a (school name) Student-Athlete or co-curricular participant, you should:

1. **Be Aware that Privacy Settings are NOT Foolproof.** (School name) students are highly encouraged to use privacy settings on social media sites. However, (school name) students should be aware that privacy settings are not foolproof. Although social media sites provide their users with privacy improvement updates, the changes occur frequently and can get complicated. Even if you diligently monitor your privacy settings, it's best to assume that anything you post may potentially be seen by your school, your parents and strangers.
2. **Avoid Posting Confidential Information.** Be aware of the kind of information you are posting on social media sites. Posting information such as your date of birth, address, phone number, class schedule, social security number, bank account number, etc. is **NOT** recommended. Once such information is posted, it becomes the property of the social media site.
3. **Avoid Unprofessional Public Profiles.** Any information you put on social media sites is considered public information and may be viewed by members of the public. Be mindful of the image you create for yourself online. Potential, current and future employers as well as college admissions recruiters may access the information you put on social media sites.
4. **Avoid Posting Illegal Activities.** Photos posted via social media become the property of the social media site. You may delete the photo from your profile but the photo remains on the social media site's

server. Internet search engines such as Google or Yahoo may still find that image long after you have deleted it from your profile. In addition, even if your profile is set to private, a friend can always download and save incriminating photos that third parties, such as the authorities, can use against you in the future. (School name) students should avoid the following:

- Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; vandalism; stalking; underage drinking; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.

5. **Avoid Bullying\Threats of Violence.** While (school name) students have a right to free speech, that right is **NOT** unlimited. Bullying is a serious problem and is not limited to student-to-student interactions. Vicious treatment and hateful words often lead to violence, suicide, depression, and discrimination. (School name) students should avoid the following:

- Derogatory language or remarks about teammates, coaches, students, staff members, athletic administrators, or representatives of other schools;
- Demeaning statements about and/or threats to any third party; and
- Creating serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.

(School name) students should be aware that if their conduct is deemed inappropriate, such conduct may be subject to discipline, not only by school authorities, but also by law enforcement agencies.

6. **Avoid Lying, Cheating & Plagiarizing.** Again, all information posted on social media sites is considered public information. It may be viewed by third parties and used against you. It is best to assume that anything you post may be seen by your school, your parents and your peers.

(School name) students participating in athletics and other co-curricular activities should be aware that their online actions have consequences. While (school name) does not monitor student social media accounts, it has the right to act on information provided by third parties (i.e. students, parents, & community members). (School name) also has a right to investigate students; social media sites in the event of allegations of inappropriate online conduct. Pursuant to the California Education Code, including but not limited to, sections 220, 234, 234.1, 32261 and 48900 *et. Seq.* and applicable federal and state case law, (school name) has a right to discipline students for online conduct which is related to a school activity or attendance and is: 1) substantially or foreseeably disruptive to the (school name) environment; 2) lewd, vulgar or offensive; and/or 3) advocating violence or illegal activity. In addition, students should be aware that, in certain circumstances, their online conduct may be subject to criminal prosecution.

The following online actions are considered to be substantially or foreseeably disruptive to the (school name) environment; lewd, vulgar or offensive; and/or advocating violence or illegal activity and therefore subject to the consequences listed below:"

ONLINE ACTIONS

General inappropriate language of a profane or sexual nature
Profane or inappropriate language or remarks directed toward teammates, coaches, other (school name) students, staff, coaches, as well as athletic administrators and representatives from other schools
Demeaning statements about or threats to any third party
Incriminating photos, statements, or language in reference to violence, drug or alcohol use, bullying, or any other inappropriate behaviors
Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person
Indicating knowledge of an unreported felony theft or property damage
Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation

Engaging in or indicating knowledge of cyber bullying and/or harassing another student or staff member
“Liking” any of the above comments or photos on Facebook or any other social networking sites indicates your approval of such comments and thereby holds you to the same standard. Should you choose to “Like” such comments/photos made on social networks by your friends, the consequences outlined below will apply.
“Retweeting” or marking a tweet as a “Favorite” on Twitter also indicates your approval of inappropriate comments and thereby holds you to the same standard. Choosing to retweet or favorite an inappropriate comment or picture will subject you the consequences outlined below.
“Subtweeting” is not permitted under any circumstances. The notion that you are choosing not to identify the victim of your bullying or inappropriate comments DOES NOT preclude you from the below consequences.
Other inappropriate behavior as deemed so by (school name) School Athletics or Administration

CONSEQUENCES

1 st Offense	1 Game/Match Benching/Suspension from Participation
2 nd Offense	Removal from the team or activity for the season*

**Removal from a team results in the student being unable to participate in any sport during that particular season.*

It is the expectation of (school name) that as a Student-Athlete or co-curricular participant, you will represent our school in the best possible manner. Your signature below indicates that you understand this information and the attached discipline. Furthermore, you will continue to uphold the high standards and character that is expected of all of our students.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Student Name (Please Print)

Date