

Arp ISD Social Media Policy --DH(LOCAL)

For the purposes of these guidelines, social media refers to any facility for online publication and commentary including, but not limited to, blogs, wikis, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Flickr, messaging services, email, chat rooms, and YouTube. These guidelines are in addition to and complement any existing or future policies from ARP ISD regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail, and the internet. Arp ISD employees are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with these guidelines. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunications such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.

Arp ISD faculty/staff are subject to district policies to the extent that they identify themselves as an ARP ISD employee or are recognized as an Arp ISD employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to Arp ISD).

Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that ARP ISD employees must follow according to the district posting policy (<http://tinyurl.com/lekql9v>).

Setting up Social Media

The district endorses the use of the Arp ISD Remind App for communicating with parents and students. The Arp ISD Technology Department is available for assistance in establishing school-sponsored social media accounts, with appropriate settings. (See other district-approved resources)

Confidentiality

Employees of Arp ISD are expected to maintain student confidentiality at all times. Publication and public discussion of confidential information are unacceptable and unlawful. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, grades, health information, and any personal information that may be used to identify a student.

Privacy Settings

Privacy settings on school social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information, which is similar to information available on the district website. Privacy settings that may allow others to post information should be set to limit access. On personal social media accounts, it is advisable to use privacy settings to limit access

as well.

Professionalism

When blogging or posting on school-related social media accounts, emailing or communicating with other teachers or students, it is important to clearly identify yourself as an employee of Arp ISD. Communications should not include information that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading, hurtful, slanderous, or in poor taste.

When participating in any online discussion, clearly identify yourself and your vested interest in the discussion. It is important to protect yourself and your privacy. When posting online, carefully consider the content and be cautious about disclosing any personal information.

Copyright Laws

It is critical to respect laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others. It is acceptable to quote short excerpts of others' work and to attribute credit to the original source/author or to provide a link to the original source rather than reproducing the work of others.

Personal Publications

Personal publications should be respectful of the general public, as well as the Arp ISD staff and community. It is highly advisable to avoid using ethnic slurs, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenities, etc.

When posting online, make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone, and do not officially represent Arp ISD. Please be aware that any private or personal posting or publication that disrupts the educational environment of Arp ISD may be considered for disciplinary action.

The use of social media should not interfere with employee responsibilities. The use of social media during work hours should be limited to educational purposes only. No access will be granted to Facebook or LinkedIn on any district device due to a large number of malware infections from these sites.

Social Media Regulations & Personal Use of Electronic Media

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Weblogs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn). Electronic media

also includes all forms of telecommunications such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.

Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The employee is responsible for the content on personal social media including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

Mandatory Requirements:

1. Communication with students should always be at a professional level and should be limited to educational concerns and to matters within the scope of professional responsibilities. For example, professionals should pertain to academic and/ or UIL schedules, events, changes in schedules, academic reminders (tests, projects, homework), make-up assignments, etc. using Remind 101.

EXCEPTION: The district makes an exception to the mandatory confinements of electronic communication in the case of a student who is an immediate family member (child, niece, or nephew). In the case of an immediate relative, all ethical and appropriate communication standards are still required.

TASB electronic communication compliance involving any student(s) using text messaging the employee **must**:

- include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;
- include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient of each text message to the student(s) so that the student(s) and supervisor receive the same message.

2. The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social media page for the purpose of communicating with students (Remind App, Twitter, or Arp Websites). Please note that an employee does NOT have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents. In case of emergencies or changes in schedules, employees should communicate using Twitter@ArpISD.

- 3. The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. An employee may, however, make public posts to school-related social networks at any time.**
- 4. Facebook and other posting services should NOT be used to communicate as a representative of Arp ISD.**
- 5. Social media tools are two-way communication. Before using a tool, teachers are required to instruct students on appropriate communication skills, including how to respond appropriately to teachers and to their peers. A parent or student may make a written request at any time for an employee to discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.**
- 6. Avoid online groups that are considered unprofessional or inappropriate.**
- 7. Avoid posting opinions or information that could put you at risk of disciplinary action.**
- 8. Recognize the Laws & Guidelines governing communication with students. These include The Professional Code of Conduct:**
 - Educators shall accurately report all information required by the local board of education, state education agency, federal agency or state or federal law.**
 - Educators maintain a positive role model and professional demeanor realizing that their actions reflect directly on the status and substance of the education profession.**
 - Educators adhere to federal, state, and local laws and statutes regarding criminal activity, FERPA, CIPA, DOPPA, etc.**
 - Educators shall comply with state and federal laws by maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times both in and out of the classroom.**
 - Educators serve as positive role models and do not use inappropriate communication, or sexually construed conduct, racial or gender slurs, aggression, inappropriate language, gestures, lewdness even jokingly or lascivious expressions with students whether online, through social media, or face-to-face.**
 - Educators ensure that all technology is used to promote appropriate communications between teachers, parents, and students**

- **Educators comply with state and federal laws to maintain confidential information concerning any student, family, or school-related information AND refrain from gossip, malicious talk, or disparagement.**

Enforcement

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or prosecution for a cause in accordance with state & federal laws and ARP ISD policies.

Texting Classified as an Open Record for Businesses/Public Institutions and Regulated as Such ([see Regulations](#))

In highly regulated industries, text communications need to be retained and supervised. For instance, financial services firms are required by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) to archive and supervise electronic communications used for business purposes, including text messages. Messaging must be done using a service that archives messages such as Remind App.

[GUIDELINES](#)

Employee Statement of Social Media Compliance

I, _____ (print name) have read and understand the Social Media Guidelines and Policies and the Arp ISD Posting Policies. I understand my duty as an Arp ISD employee to maintain a professional level of communication at all times with peers, parents, students, community members and all Arp ISD stakeholders on all social media sites & communication services where I participate as a contributor.

I understand that my conduct inside and outside the school day must uphold a positive role model for the Arp ISD community and students.

Signature

Date

Return this signature page to your campus principal or immediate supervisor.

RESOURCE: [TASB School Law for School District Employees & Electronic Media](#)