



507 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Spero Academy understands the value of social networking and social media in today's world. Social Media takes many forms including social media sites, blogs, file sharing sites, forums, discussion groups and chat rooms. Social Media can be an extremely effective way of marketing our school and expanding our interactions with employees, vendors and customers. While embracing new technology, we also want to make sure that Spero Academy and our employees engage in social networking in a responsible manner.

Spero Academy supports its employees' use of social media by providing this policy and the following acceptable use guidelines. Spero Academy employees who engage in social media must do so in a manner that is safe, responsible, and civil.

II. 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, and LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Vimeo, SnapChat, Flickr, and Shutterfly.
- B. **Exclusions:** Not all online or phone-app 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. Examples of electronic communication tools that are not considered social media networks include: computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, email, direct text/instant messaging.
- C. **Personal Social Media:** Social media use that is created, maintained and used by an employee for personal use (such as Facebook or Twitter).
- D. **Professional Social Media:** Social media use that is created, maintained and used by an employee for professional use (such as Linked In).
- E. **Organizational Social Media:** Social media sites of any kind that are created, maintained and used by a Spero Academy authorized person to represent the school as an entity.

III. APPLICATION OF OTHER POLICIES

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 guidelines and with additional guidelines and policies related Spero Academy policies, but not limited to:

Spero Academy Parent Student Handbook All other sections of the Employee Handbook

All policies regarding rules and harassment and conduct can be found in 907 Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

IV. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY

General Conduct

Social networking sites should not be considered private. Generally, information posted on social networking sites is public and you should expect that even with your use of certain privacy settings, what you post on social networking sites will be seen by others and should not be considered private.

Social media sites should not be used during work times unless for business-related activities. We may monitor social media communications to ensure compliance with School policies.

Use common sense and think before you post. You are responsible for the content you publish on social media sites. As a representative of Spero Academy, always consider how your comments will be viewed in light of protecting and enhancing both Spero Academy's reputation and your own.

Respect others, and keep gripes and disputes offline. 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. You can 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.

Social media can be productive and beneficial both personally and professionally. However, ensure that this personal activity does not interfere with your work activities.

Understand which social networking sites you would benefit from most, how each works and which features each offers. Always review the applicable privacy and security settings so that you understand how much or how little information you're comfortable sharing.

Inclusions and Exclusions:

In posting on personal social media sites, Spero Academy employees agree to not:

- Connect (friend, follow, etc.) to social media profiles of current or former students of Spero Academy until they reach the age of 18.
- Speak on behalf of Spero Academy or represent yourself in a manner that may lead readers to believe that you are speaking on behalf of Spero Academy.
- Engage parents, students or the community as a representative of Spero Academy.
- Post images, videos, audio files, names, or any other potentially identifying material about students.
- Use it as an official platform to communicate with teachers or students, such as weekly newsletters and other school announcements or notifications.
- Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, employees, parent, volunteers, or any other person related to Spero Academy.
- Post material that Spero Academy Administration or site administrators determine is threatening, illegal, harassing, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards any Spero Academy individual or entity.
- Post material that infringes on the rights or privacy of any individual associated with Spero Academy.
- Share or disclose confidential or proprietary information of Spero Academy, or its students, families, vendors and employees.
- Use their Spero Academy email to create personal social media profiles.
- 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).
- Post comments under multiple names, alias or false identity regarding Spero Academy or any person associated with Spero Academy.

V. PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

General Conduct

Social networking sites should not be considered private. Generally, information posted on social networking sites is public and you should expect that even with your use of certain privacy settings, what you post on social networking sites will be seen by others and should not be considered private.

Social media sites should not be used during work times unless for business-related activities.

Use common sense and think before you post. You are responsible for the content you publish on social media sites. As a representative of Spero Academy, always consider how your comments will be viewed in light of protecting and enhancing both Spero Academy's reputation and your own.

Respect others, and keep gripes and disputes offline. 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. You can 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.

Posts that may defame, damage, degrade, or harm any individual, group, or entity, or 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 requested to be removed.

Social media can be productive and beneficial both personally and professionally. However, ensure that this personal activity does not interfere with your work activities.

Permission, Inclusions and Exclusions:

Creating or maintaining a Professional Social Media Profile where you represent yourself, as a professional associated with Spero Academy must be reported to the Program Coordinator for monitoring.

Using a social media platform to communicate with parents or the community is subject to approval of Spero Academy. Spero Academy reserves the right to undertake any or all of the following:

- Restrict the types of activities or posts made by you
- Request that profiles be removed, shut down, or disassociated from Spero Academy
- Ban future posts
- Remove or request that you edit postings, photos, videos, audio, data files or comments at any time, whether or not they violate this Policy.

In posting on professional social media sites, Spero Academy employees agree to not:

- Speak on behalf of Spero Academy or represent yourself in a manner, which may lead readers to believe that you are speaking on behalf of Spero Academy.
- Post images, videos, audio files, names, or any other potentially identifying material about students without the express consent of the Program Coordinator or Program Specialist and with strict adherence to the general guidelines of this policy as stated below as stated in the Organizational Social Media Use section below. Please note that each individual post of such materials must be pre-approved.
- 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 Spero Academy.
- Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, employees, parent, volunteers, or any other person related to Spero Academy.
- Post material that Spero Academy Administration or site administrators determine is threatening, illegal, harassing, obscene, defamatory, slanderous or hostile towards any Spero Academy individual or entity.
- Post material that infringes on the rights or privacy of any individual associated with Spero Academy.
- Share or disclose confidential or proprietary information of Spero Academy, or its students, families, vendors and employees.
- Post comments under multiple names, alias or false identity regarding Spero Academy or any person associated with Spero Academy.
- The employee must uphold the school's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about Spero Academy, its employees, its students or their families, or members of the Spero Academy community.
- An employee may not 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.
- An employee may not participate in spreading false or unsubstantiated rumors or false information.
- If the school believes that an employee's activity on a social networking site, blog or personal website violates the school's policies, the school may request that the employee cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action including possible loss of employment.

Additional Usage Guidelines

As an Spero Academy employee, make it clear when posting to your professional social media profiles that yourself and not speaking on behalf of the school. The best way to do this is to write in first person. If you are unclear on how to create a post without sounding as though you are representing Spero Academy, consult the Program Coordinator or the Director.

Where no policy or written guidelines exist, employees should use professional judgment and act appropriately. Employees will seek the guidance when uncertain as to acceptable practices.

Any statement regarding Spero Academy or its participants, or members of the greater Spero Academy community is subject to scrutiny that, depending upon the circumstance, may lead to discipline up to and including termination.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

General Conduct

Spero Academy considers social networks as significant new forms of public communication. Spero Academy employees who engage in social networking will be held to the same publication and professional standards as for all official school endeavors.

The nature of all social media communication and settings used by employees with students must be strictly professional and educational in manner.

Only approved administration may post to any social media sites that are created and maintained in order to represent the school as an organization. The Director has discretion to decide who may post to Spero Academy social media sites as a representation of Spero Academy.

All sites that are created as Spero Academy social media sites must be monitored regularly to ensure that third parties are not posting inappropriate content or otherwise misusing the profile.

As a representative of Spero Academy, always consider how your comments will be viewed in light of protecting and enhancing both Spero Academy's reputation and your own.

Respect others, and keep gripes and disputes offline. 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. You can 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.

Social media can be productive and beneficial both personally and professionally. However, ensure that this personal activity does not interfere with your work

activities.

Creating and Maintaining Spero Academy Social Media Sites

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

- Logos and graphics used on the site must be consistent with the branding standards and usage guidelines of the school.
- The 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.
- Posting of photos, video, audio files, and comments must conform to the general guidelines of this policy as stated below.
- Passwords should be kept by the 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 Director, the Program Coordinator and the one other administrator should know how to remove the profile from the internet.
- Announcements made for parents and teachers to social media sites should be considered only as redundant forms of communication. They should not be considered as a means of communication to replace telephone, email, or other official lines of communication to parents and employees.

Posting Photos, Videos and Audio Files

For the protection and safety of all participants in the Spero Academy community, those using Spero Academy social media sites should not identify pictures using a student's name. Students' 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.

Photos, videos and audio files that may defame, damage, degrade, or harm any individual, group, or entity, or 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.

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

Cross References:

Spero Academy Policy 504 – Harassment and Violence
Spero Academy Policy 700 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
Spero Academy Policy 907 – Internet Acceptable Use Policy
Spero Academy Policy 908 – Hazing Prohibition
Spero Academy Policy 910 – Student Bullying Policy