Board of Directors Policy

Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy

Purpose & Scope
Statement of Purpose

The Charter School of Wilmington is committed to creating a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of our community. We support a school environment free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, or disability.

The dual purposes of this Policy are: (a) to prevent harm and potential harm to Students and Staff Members caused by unmonitored Electronic Communications; and (b) to set forth the parameters of Social Media use by employees of The Charter School of Wilmington (CSW) in a way that does not impede or interfere with CSW’s mission and vision.

The purpose of this Policy is not to discourage Staff Members’ use of Social Media, but to encourage use that does not interfere with CSW operations, impede the ability of the Staff Member to perform his/her duties, or compromise the safety or well-being of Students.

Scope

Covered Persons

This Policy applies to the use of certain technology by employees (“Staff Members”) of The Charter School of Wilmington (CSW). This Policy applies without regard to whether such use occurs during working or nonworking time and without regard to whether CSW equipment or property is used.

This Policy does not address Student use of the Internet. For that purpose, CSW has adopted an Internet Safety Curriculum, which covers: (a) cyber-bullying; (b) appropriate online behavior; and (c) social media, social networking, and chat rooms.
**Covered Technology**
This Policy applies to Staff Members’ use of Electronic Communications and Social Media (“Covered Technology”). Specifically excepted from the definition of “Covered Technology” is any technology that has been officially authorized or approved by CSW (“Approved Technology”).

For the purposes of this Policy, “Electronic Communications” shall mean any communication that is sent, delivered, or received via: (a) email; (b) instant message; (c) text message; (d) telephone, including cellular or mobile phone and smartphones; (e) Social Media; (f) the Internet; or (g) other similar technology.

Specifically excepted from the definition of “Covered Technology” is any technology that has been officially authorized or approved by CSW (“Approved Technology”). For the purposes of this Policy, “Social Media” shall mean any website, application, tool, or platform that enables communication between users or the publication of content by an individual. For purposes of illustration only, current examples of Social Media include: (a) social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Reddit, WhatsApp); (b) blogs and microblogs (e.g., Twitter, Tumblr); (c) and content-sharing sites (e.g., YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, Snapchat).

**Applicability of Other Policies**
This Policy is intended to supplement, not replace, other CSW policies.

**Prohibited Conduct**
As stated above, Staff Member’s Online Conduct is subject to the same standards of conduct applicable to conduct engaged in off-line. The following list is not intended to be comprehensive or exclusive but, instead, to identify some examples of prohibited Online Conduct that is considered by CSW to have the most serious consequences. Staff Members who engage in any of the prohibited conduct listed below will be subject to corrective action in accordance with CSW policy.
Prohibited Social-Media Conduct and Use
A Staff Member may not:
engage in any Online Conduct that undermines or interferes with the Staff Member’s ability to effectively perform his or her official duties;
disclose any confidential information via Social Media;
disparage any Student;
disparage any Staff Member;
disparage the school (CSW);
make or accept a request from a Student to connect via Social Media (other than Approved Technology), including but not limited to a Facebook “friend request.”

Staff Members are expected to use social media responsibly, transparently, and primarily for the purposes of teaching and learning per CSW’s policy. Staff Members are expected to consider the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology on one’s interactions with Students, fellow Staff Members, and the general public.

Staff Members are expected to exercise prudence in maintaining separate and professional virtual profiles.

For the purposes of this Policy, a “Student” shall mean any person who currently is enrolled at CSW but shall not include: (a) a former student who is no longer enrolled at CSW; (b) a student who is an immediate family member or near relative as defined in 14 Del. C. §1318(b) and (d), respectively.

Prohibited Electronic Communications
A Staff Member may not use any Covered Technology, other than Approved Technology, to communicate with a Student unless the Staff Member has first received written consent to do so from the Student’s parent or guardian. For the purposes of this Policy, written consent shall include consent issued by email, or in actual writing.

The Staff Member and CSW shall be responsible for maintaining a record of such consent.
Prohibited Electronic Communications (cont.)
Electronic communications sent using CSW technology may not:
be used to harass or make threats;
be offensive or disruptive in nature;
include language or images related to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, religious or political beliefs, or pornography;
present personal views as CSW’s own;
engage in commercial activity unrelated to CSW;
distribute copyrighted material; or
share confidential material outside of CSW.

Duty to Report
Just as all Staff Members have a duty to report a violation of the CSW’s Harassment policy, so, too, must Staff Members report any known or reasonably suspected violation of this Policy. Thus, any Staff Member who observes or who becomes aware of the violation of this Policy by another Staff Member, has the duty to report such information to CSW and to cooperate fully in any resulting investigation. The policy and procedures set forth in CSW’s Harassment policy apply to the duty to report for the purposes of this Policy, as well.

Failure to report a known or reasonably suspected violation of this Policy may result in corrective action. In the event that CSW determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, it shall notify the Student’s parents or guardian as soon as possible of its determination. A reasonable attempt to notify shall be made no longer than three (3) working days from the date of the determination.

Notice of Intent to Monitor
Staff Members are hereby notified that any content posted online may be discovered or reported to CSW. For example, information may be discovered by CSW as a result of CSW’s efforts to monitor its online reputation, as a result of an investigation or complaint, or other legitimate reason.

Staff Members are also notified that information received or discovered by CSW will be handled in accordance with CSW’s policies and procedures. Staff Members are
reminded that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to information published online.

Questions About this Policy
Because of the rapidly changing and constantly evolving nature of the Covered Technology, it is likely that issues will arise that are not specifically addressed by this Policy. Any Staff Member who is uncertain about the application of this Policy to a particular scenario or in a particular set of circumstances, should seek the guidance of CSW Administration before engaging in the questionable Online Conduct.