	815.1. SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
1. Purpose	The Shaler Area School District realizes that part of the 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is part of 21st century learning. However, technology and social media also present risks to individuals and organizations if not used appropriately.
	Social media has many educational benefits but when social media postings violate the law or District policies or create a substantial disruption to the school community and/or work environment, the administration may have an obligation to respond and take appropriate action, including but not limited to investigation, removal of posts, discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement.
	The District has developed the following guidelines to provide direction for Users when participating in online social media activities.
2. Definition	**User**: Anyone who utilizes or attempts to utilize District technology resources while on or off District property. The term applies to any person who may use District technology.
	District Technology Resources: All technology owned and/or operated by the District, including computers, projectors, televisions, video and sound systems, mobile devices, calculators, scanners, printers, cameras, portable hard drives, hardware, software, routers, and networks, including the Internet.
	Electronic communication: Any communication or interaction which occurs through electronic means, including but not limited to computers, tablets, cellular devices, "smart phones," iPads, iPods, Internet capable MP3 players, etc. Such communications and interactions include, but are not limited to, phone calls, emails, texts, social media, private messages on social media websites, instant messages, video chat, blogs, etc. Electronic communications include communications that have no specific intended recipient, such as posting a "status" on Facebook that depending on privacy settings, may be viewed by a group of users.
	Social media (social networking): A form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content. Social media includes websites that incorporate one or more of the following:

	Blogs: Web logs or journals where authors and users can post textual, audio or video content and where some permit others to post comments on their blogs. **Microblogs**: Websites and spaces that allow users to post short blog entries. Twitter is an example, as well as other sites that invite users to post short status and location updates such as Facebook. **Online Reviews**: Websites that provides evaluations of a publication, service, company, movie, music, book, a piece of hardware or an event or performance. In addition to a narrative commentary, the review may include a rating score to indicate its relative merit – Yelp for example. **Social networks**: Websites where users can create customized profiles and form connections, either socially or professionally, with other users based on shared characteristics and interests. **Digital publishing**: An Internet personal publishing service that provides products and services for consumers to post and share videos, audio files and/or photos as well as tag them to enable searchability. Examples include YouTube, Flickr, Picasa and Google Video. **Wikis**: Resources or documents edited collaboratively by a community of users with varying levels of editorial control by the website publisher, Wikipedia is an example. **Virtual Worlds Web- or software-based platforms**: Allow users to create avatars or representations of themselves, and through these avatars to meet, socialize and transact with other users. Virtual worlds are used for social purposes and e-commerce, non-profit fundraising and videoconferencing.
3. Delegation of Responsibility	The District aims to facilitate a learning and teaching atmosphere, to foster the mission of the District, and to protect District technology resources. Users play an important role in protecting these District assets and in lessening the risks that can harm these important assets. 1. Users are to immediately report any violations of this Policy or suspected violations to a District Administrator. 2. It is the responsibility of all Users to carefully consider their behavior and what they place online when communicating with or "friending" any individual. 3. Users may not coerce others into providing passwords, login, or other security access information to them so that they may access social media

	or locations that they have no authorization to access.
	4. Users should note that information that they place in social media and designate as private can be accessed in litigation, can be distributed by their friends, and can be accessed in other various legal ways.
	The District's Technology Staff is authorized to access Users' postings on public locations and on District servers, hard drives, systems, and networks under the direction of the Superintendent, and/or designee, law enforcement, a court order, a subpoena, or other legal action or authority.
	The Superintendent, and/or designee, shall create administrative procedures to carry out the purpose of this Social Media Policy.
4. Guidelines	This policy is intended both to encourage meaningful electronic communication and provide Users with the District's expectations for communicating in these manners.
	The official District website serves as the primary authorized Internet-based presence of the School Board and District for the electronic posting and provision of public information about the Board and the District.
	The following guidelines apply to Users who choose to create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kinds of social media.
	1. Users are responsible for their own behavior when communicating by use of social media.
	2. Users will be held accountable for the content of the communications stated/posted on social media locations where such communications materially disrupt school operations and are not otherwise-protected speech.
	3. Users are responsible for complying with the School District's code of conduct requirements and Acceptable Use Policies.
	4. Users may not disrupt the learning atmosphere, educational programs, school activities, and the rights of others.
	The District expects anyone who participates in online commentary to:
	1. Demonstrate integrity, be aware that everything written is public, and obey all copyright laws.
	2. Review the content of any links before embedding them as a part of

commentary to ensure that such links are consistent with the District's educational mission and vision.

3. Not use the name of the "Shaler Area School District" or its logo or mark in any form in social media without the expressed, written permission of the Superintendent and/or designee and adherence to the Titan Head Logo Policy No. 917.

4. Staff members shall not post to any social media any material or information protected from disclosure under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or other applicable laws, regulations or policies including, but not limited to, education records, personally identifiable information, photos, video recordings or audio recordings of students, District staff, parents or other constituents of the District/community and shall follow all Board policies related to protection of confidential information.

5. Limit communications between staff members and students to academic or instructional content or legitimate educational matters. Adults shall not follow or accept requests for current students to be "friends" or connections on personal social networking sites and shall not create any networking site for communication with students other than those provided by the District for this purpose, without the prior written approval of the building principal. There will be circumstances where personal relationships develop between an adult and a student's family, e.g. when their children become friends or through non-District activities. This policy is not intended to interfere with such relationships or to limit activities that are normally consistent with such relationships. As with other forms of communication, however, when communicating electronically with students, adults shall maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

6. Seek permission from the Superintendent and/or designee before endorsing a product or service on behalf of the District.

Privacy - The District reserves the right to monitor any user's utilization of District technology resources. Users have no expectation of privacy while using District technology resources whether on or off District property.

1. The District may monitor, inspect, copy, and review any and all usage of District technology resources including information transmitted and received via the Internet to ensure compliance with this and other District policies, and state and federal law.

2. All e-mails and messages, as well as any files stored on District technology resources, may be inspected at any time for any reason.

	3. Where users place their communication in "privacy" marked social media, they cannot expect that their information will not be disclosed by a person within their "private marked group". Such information may be disclosed by others within the "private group", or the information may be discovered as part of the discovery process in litigation, or it may be disclosed by other means. The School District may be provided this information and be required to investigate it further. Information that the School District obtains may be disclosed without limitation for purposes of investigation, disciplinary actions, litigation, internal dispute resolution, and legitimate business purposes regardless of whether the particular user is involved. This policy specifically authorizes utilization of social networking by staff members for education-related purposes if and when these communications are completely within the editorial oversight of District Administration. A staff member wishing to create an education-related social media page should contact and (if applicable) obtain approval from his/her supervisor about the intended site and its use. The staff member shall take responsibility for ensuring that the site is used appropriately, including making sure that others posting on the site adhere to confidentiality, privacy, copyright, and all related board policies as well as all applicable local, state, and federal laws/regulations. Staff members are reminded that they are professionals and are representatives of both the District and the community in all aspects of their lives and should conduct themselves accordingly when utilizing social media/networking. Unless specifically authorized by their supervisor, staff members are not authorized and therefore restricted from speaking on behalf of the District. If a staff member chooses to identify himself/herself as a staff member of the District on a social networking site, a disclaimer must be made on the site which makes it clear that his/her writings are his/her own and do not reflect the views of the District. Staff members must be honest about their identity when utilizing social networking sites and must not pretend to be another person or intentionally mask his/her identity.
5. Consequences	Violation of this policy will result in discipline as appropriate up to and including termination, in accordance with all applicable District disciplinary policies and procedures and any applicable collective bargaining agreements. Moreover, and where warranted, the District shall notify the appropriate public authorities (including but not limited to the police) of improper communications. As to volunteers, violations may result in removal from the position.