



*Communication/Media Services*

# **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**



# RUSD Social Media

## The Social Media in RUSD

The Rialto Unified School District realizes that a major component of the 21st Century learning process is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments are all a part of 21st Century learning experience. To this aim, Rialto Unified School District has developed the following guidelines to provide direction for instructional employees, students and the school district community when participating in online social media activities.

Whether or not an employee chooses to participate in a blog, wiki, online social network or any other form of online publishing or discussion it is his or her own decision. Free speech protects educators who want to participate in social media, but the laws and courts have ruled that schools can discipline teachers, if their speech, including online postings, disrupts school operations. The Rialto Unified School District social media guidelines encourage employees to participate in online social activities. But it is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability; keeping in mind that information produced by Rialto Unified School District teachers and students is a reflection on the entire District and is subject to the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

By accessing, creating or contributing to any blogs, wikis, or other social media for classroom or District use, you agree to abide by these guidelines. Please read them carefully before posting or commenting on any blog or creating any classroom blog, wiki and/or podcast.





Social Media Staff Guidelines  
Personal Responsibilities

- Rialto Unified School District employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy and the privacy of others.
- You must have permission/written and verbal before videotaping or posting any pictures of a minor. No exceptions. Students 17 and under, are considered minors.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- Your task in promoting a program/event is to concentrate on the subject. The account should not be self-serving, void of your political or educational opinions
- When posting to your blog be sure you state that the information is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of Rialto Unified School District.
- Remember that blogs, wikis and podcasts are an extension of your classroom or support site. What is inappropriate in your classroom/site should be deemed inappropriate online.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as a Rialto Unified School District employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at Rialto Unified School District.
- When contributing online do not post confidential student information. This is not only unethical, it is illegal and prosecution may be considered by the parental party.

## Social Media Staff Guidelines Personal Responsibilities





## Disclaimers/Copyright & Fair Use

### Disclaimers:

- Rialto Unified School District employees are highly encouraged to include disclaimers within their personal blogs that the views are their own and do not reflect on their employer. For example, “The postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent Rialto Unified School District’s positions, strategies, opinions, or policies.”
- This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt Rialto Unified School District employees from a special responsibility when blogging.
- Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer, but teachers or designees are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.

### Copyright and Fair Use

- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. See U.S. Copyright Office - Fair Use
- A hyperlink to outside sources is recommended. Be sure not to

plagiarize and give credit where it is due. When using a hyperlink, be sure that the content is appropriate and adheres to the Rialto Unified School District AUP.

### Profiles and Identity

- Remember your association and responsibility with the Rialto Unified School District in online social environments. If you identify yourself as a Rialto Unified District employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents, and students. How you represent yourself online should be comparable to how you represent yourself in person.
- No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on blogs or wikis.
- Be cautious how you setup your profile, bio, avatar, etc.
- When uploading digital pictures or avatars that represent yourself make sure you select a school appropriate image. Adhere to Employee handout book guidelines as well as your AUP. Also remember not to utilize protected images. Images should be available under Creative Commons or your own.



## Personal Beliefs

The District advises staff to be mindful of publicly displaying bias towards any one particular religion and/or spiritual belief when promoting students and/or staff and disseminating District public relations and marketing information. Cultural events in a diverse education community would take place over promotions regarding student and or staff's beliefs.

Public school religion cases allow the Supreme Court to define establishment clause protection. It was not until after World War II that the Court interpreted the meaning of the establishment clause.

In *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947), the Court held that the establishment clause is one of the liberties protected by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, making it applicable to state laws and local ordinances. Since then the Court has attempted to discern the precise nature of the separation of church and state.



- Use of Social Media such as Facebook, twitter and Instagram
- Rialto Unified School District employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional Standards.
- By posting your comments having online conversations etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what you 'say' online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
- Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of students or professional colleagues are concerned.
- Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco substance or profane language using any Rialto Unified School District schools' name are deemed inappropriate.
- Rialto Unified School District discourages teachers, administration or other staff members from 'friending' active students on personal accounts. The Rialto Unified School District does ask staff to consider creating a fan page in Facebook or a separate classroom/club twitter account instead of using your personal account.
- Social Bookmarking
- Be aware that others can view the sites that you bookmark.
- Be aware of words used to tag or describe the bookmark.
- Be aware of URL shortening services. Verify the landing site to which they point before submitting a link as a bookmark. It would be best to utilize the original URL if not constrained by the number of characters as in microblogs -- i.e. twitter.
- Attempt to link directly to a page or resource if possible as you do not control what appears on landing pages in the future.
- Instant Messaging
- Rialto Unified School District employees are required to get authorization to have instant messaging programs downloaded on their school computers.
- Rialto Unified School District employees also recognize this same authorization is required for access to instant messaging programs that are available through web interfaces with no download
- Avatar images and profile information should follow the same guidelines as the above Profiles and Identity section.

