## 1. Purpose

Twenty-first century skills, inclusive of online communication and learning, are critical in the preparation of students to become productive and responsible citizens in a global society. The use of Social Media / Social Networking tools and interactive, online applications offer an authentic, real-world opportunity for student learning. The Board supports the use of social media to facilitate inquiry, investigation and innovation in the pursuit of educational objectives. The District also recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe environment within which learning can thrive. It is therefore necessary to provide safeguards regarding publicly available social media networks, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds and similar systems.

## 2. Definitions

**Computer** includes any hardware, software, or other technology attached or connected to, installed in, or otherwise used in connection with a computing system. Computer includes, but is not limited to: desktop, tablet, table or laptop computers; specialized electronic equipment used for special education purposes; global positioning systems (GPS); personal digital assistants (PDAs); personal electronic devices, cell phones with or without Internet access and/or recording capabilities; mobile phones or wireless devices; beepers; digital music players, digital video players or a digital video recorder; and any other such technology developed.

**Digital Communications** are applications intended to facilitate synchronous and asynchronous communication between one or more persons using computer-based networks and Internet resources. Digital communications include e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, voice-over-IP and video conferencing.

**E-mail** is defined as an asynchronous system for sending and receiving messages electronically over a computer network to one or more recipients.

**Educational Purpose** includes use of the network and electronic communications systems for learning activities, professional or career development, and to support the school district’s curriculum policy and mission statement.

**Electronic Communications System (ECS)** is any messaging, collaboration, publishing, broadcast or distribution system that depends on electronic...
communications resources to create, send, forward, reply to, transmit, store, hold, copy, download, display, view, read or print electronic records for purposes of communication across electronic communications network systems between or among individuals or groups, that is either explicitly denoted as a system for electronic communications or is implicitly used for such purposes. Further, an electronic communications system means any wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-optical or photo-electronic facilities for the transmission of wire or electronic communications, and any computer facilities or related electronic equipment for the electronic storage of such communications. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Internet, intranet, electronic mail services, GPS systems, cell phones and PDAs.

**Harmful to Minors** – any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depictions that:
1. Taken as a whole, with respect to minors, appeals to the prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion.
2. Depicts, describes or represents in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual content, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or lewd exhibition of genitals.
3. Taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value to minors.

**Instant Messaging** is the synchronous transmission of an electronic message over a computer network that immediately displays the message on one or more recipient’s computer screens.

**Minor** is an individual who has not attained the age of seventeen (17).

**Obscene** - analysis of the material meets one of the following elements:
1. Whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest.
2. Whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state or federal law to be obscene.
3. Whether the work taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

**Sexual Act and Sexual Content** as defined at 18 U.S.C. 2246(2), at 18 U.S.C. 2246(3), and at 18 Pa.C.S.A. 5903

**Social Media Networks** include: web sites, web logs (blogs), video logs (vlogs), wikis, online forums, virtual worlds and any other Internet-based system that provides the tools for users to exchange information, including audio, video, still images, or text through synchronous or asynchronous means. Social Media
Authority

Effective operation of the district’s programs requires the cooperation of all district employees, students and guests working together under a system of policies and rules. Each student, who desires to use social media and digital communications, shall be instructed in the procedures, ethics and security involved in using such applications before receiving an account name and password and before being permitted to access any social media applications or digital communications systems on the District network. Use of social media on the District network by students must be consistent with the Acceptable Use Policy. (Policy 244)

The district intends to strictly protect its network against outside and internal risks and vulnerabilities. Students are an important component in protecting such systems. Students may only use social media and digital communications systems for educational purposes and must comply with this policy and all other applicable Board policies including the Acceptable Use Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, Internet Service Provider terms, local, state and federal laws, and must not damage or cause disruption to others.

As required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Board defines as inappropriate for access by minors the following materials:

1. Images, text, audio, electronic communications, social media and software that are obscene, pornographic (including child pornography), harmful to minors as defined by CIPA or sexually explicit.

2. Images, text, audio, electronic communications, social media and software that portray extreme violence, aid in the construction of weapons as defined in the Safe Schools Act, or advocate or incite violence.
4. Delegation of Responsibility

Students shall understand and practice proper ethical and legal use of network facilities. Students have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of all district users of network facilities, social media and digital communications.

The Superintendent and administrators are delegated the authority to determine appropriate use and may deny, revoke, suspend or close any user account at any time based upon his/her determination of inappropriate use by an account holder or user.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for implementing technology and procedures to determine whether the network facilities are being used for purposes prohibited by law or district policy, or for accessing materials to which the Board has prohibited access. The procedure shall include but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology protection measures, such as Internet filtering, to provide safety and security of all users from accessing material that is obscene, pornographic, harmful to minors, or otherwise inappropriate. The Superintendent or designee will determine the categories which will be filtered and will determine if/when specific material will be unfiltered.
2. Maintaining and securing a usage log.
3. Monitoring online activities.

5. Guidelines

The Lower Dauphin School District recognizes the right of its employees and students to use social media and digital communications outside of the school day for personal purposes. However, the District confirms its right to restrict digital communication and the use of social media determined by the district as inappropriate between employees and students before, during and after business hours when such systems are used for educational purposes, in order to establish a safe and educationally appropriate environment. The District further confirms its right to monitor and restrict social media and digital communications used for educational or business purposes. The Lower Dauphin School District prohibits employees from using social media systems to establish connections with students for non-school related business. It is the district’s belief that such connections may bias the professional relationship between employee and student and / or foster inappropriate relationships, whether real or perceived.

Expectations for the use of digital communications and social media applications, including blogs, wikis, synchronous and asynchronous communications systems including e-mail, podcasts, and other interactive systems shall meet the following guidelines:

<p>| 3. Images, text, audio, social media, electronic communications and software that advocate or permit gambling. |
| 4. Images, text, audio, social media, electronic communications and software that advocate, aid or facilitate breaching computer and network security. |</p>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>The use of Social Media / Social Networking applications are considered an extension of the classroom. Speech and behavior that is prohibited in the classroom is prohibited in the online environment.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>The use of Social Media / Social Networking applications shall be consistent with the mission of the Lower Dauphin School District, its published curriculum, and all applicable Board Policies.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Students are expected to use safe practices while using district-sponsored social media / social networking environments. Unapproved personal information including but not limited to last names, addresses, phone numbers or birth dates are specifically prohibited by minors.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>The use of GPS locating services on public forums intended to track a person’s whereabouts is strictly prohibited except as expressly granted by the Superintendent.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Content posted within district-sponsored social media / social networking applications must be readily accessible for review by the Superintendent or designees. Blocking, anonymizing, or otherwise limiting access to content within social media systems is prohibited.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Content posted to social media / social network applications used for the purposes of education shall be subject to review by school district administration.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Student access to district-sponsored social media / social network applications shall be under the direct supervision and maintenance of a supervising school district employee and for educational purposes only.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Access to personal social media / social network applications is prohibited while connected to the district network.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Students will be held responsible and accountable for content that is published. Students are reminded that content can be publicly available indefinitely, and should therefore be mindful to take appropriate precautions to safeguard privacy.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Students are required to make it clear that publicly posted content is that of the individual and does not reflect the official opinion or position of the Lower Dauphin School District. Students should use disclaimers such as “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent Lower Dauphin School District’s positions, strategies or opinions.”</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Respect fair use and copyright law.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Do not publish confidential or proprietary information or report on conversations that are intended to be private or internal to Lower Dauphin School District.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Access to social media / social networking applications that are prohibited or are otherwise made inaccessible within the school district’s network shall not be used for educational or business purposes even when accessible outside of the District’s network.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Personal student use of social media / social networking outside school may be subject to discipline where the use causes or poses the threat of substantial and material disruption to the school environment.</td>
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6. Conditions and Rules

**Conditions and Rules of Digital Communications**

The Lower Dauphin School District encourages the use of email, instant messaging, text messaging, Voice Over IP, cellular or mobile phones, and other digital communication systems as an effective and efficient way to improve educationally related communication. These tools address the academic needs of the School District. They are not intended for personal use. All access and use of digital communication systems shall be consistent with the mission of the Lower Dauphin School District and its published curriculum.

Students may be held accountable for the content of any digital communications sent from a school issued account. It is expected that the use of digital communications systems shall not disrupt the educational environment or the right to obtain a public education.

While the district will continue to communicate through traditional media, it is expected that the district will increasingly use email and other digital communications systems as an official means to communicate with Lower Dauphin School District employees and students. It is therefore expected that students assigned Lower Dauphin email accounts will check their School District issued email on a regular basis.

1. **Official E-mail Address:**

   Students will be assigned a Lower Dauphin School District e-mail account. The address may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Lower Dauphin School District. All Lower Dauphin School District employees will address e-mail messages to the student's assigned e-mail account. Student email addresses will end in @ldsdstudents.org. All student e-mail messages will include a footer that indicates that the message was sent from a student and which provides contact information to allow others to report any inappropriate use of email. All students will address e-mail messages to employees by means of their district assigned email account. Employee email addresses will end in @ldsd.org or @ldsd.k12.pa.us. Student and employee use of district email accounts shall be for school purposes only.

2. **Prohibited Conduct:**

   E-mail and digital communications may not be used in the following ways:
   - Unlawful activities
   - Commercial purposes
   - Personal financial gain
   - Disseminating personal information such as address, phone number, or birth date, etc.
   - Misrepresentation of the Lower Dauphin School District and/or any other person or organization other than yourself.
Policy 244

- Interference with Lower Dauphin School District technology operations including but not limited to:
  - Participating in electronic chain letters
  - Sending unsolicited electronic communications (i.e., SPAM)
  - Disruption of electronic communications
  - Corruption of electronic communications systems and services
  - Obstruction of electronic communication systems and services
  - Use of unauthorized distribution lists
- Communications not directly related to academia or school purposes.
- Use of digital communications systems for cheating, plagiarizing, or otherwise misrepresenting oneself.
- Behaviors prohibited by other federal, state, and local laws including the District's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Use of student assigned email account by anyone other than the assigned student.

3. **Access Restriction**
   Student access to and use of e-mail and other digital communications is provided at the discretion of the Lower Dauphin School District. The District maintains the right to immediately withdraw or limit access and use of e-mail and other digital communications for any reason. Any alleged violations of District policies will be referred to a district administrator for further investigation and adjudication.

4. **Security**
   Lower Dauphin School District does not guarantee the appropriateness of materials that can be received through the District e-mail system or any digital communications systems. While steps have been taken to provide a safe, secure, and educationally appropriate environment through filtering mechanisms, it is possible that inappropriate content will be delivered or otherwise accessed. The District cannot assure that users will not be exposed to unsolicited information. It is expected that students will not propagate any such messages or content, and that any such message or content will be immediately deleted.

5. **Privacy**
   The Lower Dauphin School District reserves the right to monitor and archive any and all e-mail and other digital communications sent or received by students at any time and for any reason.
The School District additionally reserves the right to:

1. Determine which social media and digital communications systems and services will be provided through school district resources.

2. View and monitor network traffic, disk space use, processor and system utilization, and all applications provided through the network and communications systems, including e-mail.

3. Remove excess e-mail or files which, in the sole discretion of the District, are taking up an inordinate amount of disk space.

4. Log and archive social media and digital communications used by students.

5. Revoke, suspend, limit or remove student user accounts and privileges, or refer to legal authorities when violation of this or any other applicable school district policies occurs or state or federal law is violated, including but not limited to those governing network use, copyright, security, discipline, and vandalism of school district resources and equipment.

Consequences For Inappropriate Use

1. Vandalism may result in cancellation of user privileges and may result in legal and/or disciplinary action by the district. **Vandalism** is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, and/or destroy data or computer hardware. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses or the physical destruction of property.

2. Users shall be held responsible for any damage that is caused by deliberate or willful acts to computer and network facilities, including equipment, systems, and software.

3. Illegal use of network facilities, intentional deletion or damage to files or data belonging to others; intentional copyright violations; and theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

In addition to the standards and prohibitions set forth in this policy, general rules of behavior and communications apply when using the Internet. Inappropriate use of the Internet by students may result in loss of access and/or other disciplinary actions, as is defined in the Student Discipline Code of Conduct, school district policies, the School Code, and other laws governing conduct.