



# 10 MINUTE MEETING

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

**When using social media, members should:**

1. Utilize the most secure privacy settings and check those settings often.
2. Use a profile picture they would be proud to see on a billboard in their community.
3. Use common sense when posting photos.
4. Only friend people who they actually know and consider to be friends.
5. Never friend students.
6. Never friend the parents of students.
7. Never friend colleagues who are not their friends outside of work.
8. Never post comments or status updates related to their work—including general comments.

When government acts as an employer, the constraints of the First Amendment are less severe and must leave government free to impose reasonable restrictions on its employees in the interest of safe, efficient, and harmonious delivery of services to the public. See *Pickering v. Board of Education*, 391 U.S. 563, 568 (1968).

Facebook and other social media sites have made it very easy to report abuse, with embedded report links throughout the sites. The question of whether school employees can be disciplined or discharged because of their off-duty speech posted on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat depends on the answer to three questions:

1. What did the employee say in his/her blog or post?
2. Does the employee have tenure or some other right not to be fired except for “just cause?”
3. Is there a collective bargaining agreement or employer policy that limits the authority of the school district to discipline employees for off-duty conduct?

Members need to be fully apprised of school board policies which may attempt to govern off-duty conduct.