

**Teacher Candidate Social Media Policy**  
**College of Education and Professional Development (COEPD)**  
**Marshall University**

Although using social media is a personal choice, it is essential to understand the importance of your online profile when entering the teaching profession. Teachers are held to a higher moral standard than many other professions. Although the First Amendment will protect teachers when speaking out as citizens on "matters of public concern", it will not protect all activities regarding the use of social media related to personal and professional use. It is also important to note that when using social media, it is not always what *you* post but what *someone else* might post on your site or "tag" you in that could be problematic to your professional reputation as a teacher candidate, intern, or classroom teacher. To confirm that you are aware of the following issues related to social media and your role as a teacher candidate, please initial each statement and sign the bottom of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **will not** make derogatory posts about or post pictures of any students (pre-primary to adult), teachers, other school personnel, peers in the role of teacher candidate/intern, instructors, and schools or community agencies.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that my mentor teachers may follow different rules, or expectations, as licensed and employed teachers allowing them to abide by different standards for cell phone use in class.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that just because information and pictures are deleted does not mean they are gone forever. I understand that archival systems save deleted information and that deleted information could resurface.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that choosing an alternative name on a social media site or making my profile "private" does not protect me as a teacher candidate in the Marshall University COEPD from being linked to inappropriate posts made by others or by me. If I have "private" or an alternative name on social media accounts, I will abide by these same guidelines on those accounts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

----- I understand that even if previous relationships exist with members of my chosen district, I am held to a new standard in my community as a teacher candidate, and I will be particularly mindful of my professional responsibilities when considering my online presence.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the MU COEPD **highly discourages** teacher candidates from engaging in social media relationships with students or parents who are members of the school community, even those with whom candidates have no direct contact. This would include "friending" or "following" or any other language that might be used to describe a social media affiliated relationship. If the use of social media with students is necessary for instructional purposes, permission from the school district or community agency and the MU COEPD **MUST** be obtained.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not post confidential information that was acquired during the time spent in a placement. I understand that this could also lead to possible dismissal from the district and/or other disciplinary action. This includes sharing information with a small group of friends or family members and includes sharing through both social media and other means (in personal conversations, text messages, email, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ After completing a placement, I **will not** post any information about any student, family members of students, or the school district.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that violation of the social media policy will result in the filing of a disposition report, which could result in a meeting with the MU SCOPES Office.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the policy and am responsible for any violations of the policy in the present and future.

*My signature indicates I have read this document and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the contents.*

Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_