



## **Great Oaks Academy Social Media Policy**

### **Purpose**

Great Oaks Academy exists to cultivate the minds and hearts of our students, and our social media policy is an extension of that mission. In order to foster a healthy and respectful online presence and to create and preserve an outstanding reputation in our community, our standards are high. This policy details those standards and the guidelines we have put in place.

### **Staff and Faculty use of Personal Social Media**

Great Oaks Academy respects the right of employees to engage in social media and to create online content through blogs or videos. In doing so, we encourage our staff and faculty to consider that by virtue of their employment at Great Oaks Academy, they are leaders and caretakers in our community and their actions online are part of the reputation and image they present to the world. Employees should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often becomes public, even without their consent or knowledge. Good judgement is required by all staff when posting or commenting online, just as it would be required in any public forum. Specifically, the following standards should be adhered to:

- Employees should refrain from becoming friends with or following underage students on social media. Direct or private messages to students through social media outlets are prohibited. All student communication should be conducted through a school-provided email address. It is understood that students may choose to follow a staff or faculty member. In this instance, employees should take extra care in what they choose to post or share, acknowledging that a student is in the audience.
- An employee should not make statements that would violate any of the school's policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment. The employee must uphold the school's value of respect and avoid making defamatory or malicious statements.

- An employee may not disclose any confidential information obtained during the course of his or her employment.
- If the Director or Board of Directors of Great Oaks Academy has reason to believe that an employee's activity on a social media site, blog, or personal website may violate the school's policies, they may request that the employee cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Guidelines regarding public interaction on social media apply to staff and faculty and should be adhered to.

### **Staff and Faculty use of School Social Media**

Great Oaks Academy has chosen to create an online presence that portrays our vision, mission and values as we engage with our community. This presence is carefully cultivated and maintained. All official Great Oaks Academy social media accounts and websites must be approved by the school board and maintained by the Director or a staff member of his designation. Furthermore, they should adhere to the following standards:

- Postings should promote the vision, mission, and values of Great Oaks Academy, and should be used only for informational or inspirational purposes.
- Logos and graphics must be consistent with the branding standards and usage guidelines of the school. Great Oaks Academy's logo should not be used without the permission of the Director.
- Sites that accept comments or postings by anyone other than the site administrator must be diligently monitored to ensure that information displayed fits within Great Oaks' guidelines and is appropriate to the subject matter of the page.
- In order to avoid confusion, informational postings should only be created by the Director or a staff member of his designation.
- The Board of Directors reserves the right to request that pages claiming to represent the school, but that have not been approved by the school board, be taken down.

### **Guidelines for Public Interaction on School Social Media**

Comments to Great Oaks Academy's website and social media sites are welcome and encouraged. To promote respectful discussion within these forums, we have put in place certain standards, as outlined below. Great Oaks Academy reserves the right to remove comments at any time, whether or not they violate this policy, and to ban future posts of people who repeatedly violate this policy.

- By posting a comment or other material to school's sites, users give Great Oaks the right to repost, reproduce, distribute, display or delete the content provided. The school may do so without first gaining explicit consent from the user. Great Oaks Academy reserves the right to screen all comments to public social media sites before allowing content to become visible.
- Comments must be courteous and productive and may not be profane, obscene, offensive, sexually explicit, inappropriate, inflammatory, libelous, defamatory, slanderous, or in breach of confidentiality. Comments of a nature that would negatively affect the culture of the school or be objectionable to staff, parents or students, are prohibited. Comments that violate this standard will be removed without the consent or knowledge of their author.
- Please assume that all postings will be publicly available on the internet and therefore publicly accessible without limitation or protection of any kind. Users should consider how much personal information to share, understanding that Great Oaks Academy cannot be held liable for information posted publicly to its website or social media accounts.
- Users may not post material that infringes on the rights of Great Oaks Academy or any individual or entity, including privacy, intellectual property or publication rights.
- Users may not post material that promotes or advertises a commercial product or solicits business or membership or financial or other support in any business, group or organization except in the case of Board approved fundraising efforts.
- Users may not post chain letters, post the same comment multiple times, or otherwise distribute "spam".
- Users may not allow any other individual to use their identification for posting or viewing comments, nor post comments under multiple names or using another person's name.