

SOCIAL MEDIA & EDUCATORS

Key Guidelines

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and blogs offer valuable tools for communication and education. However, educators must be cautious, as online activity—even off-campus—can impact employment.

Free Speech & Public School Employees

- Public employees have First Amendment rights, but these are limited when speech:
 - Is of personal concern and occurs on-campus.
 - Is made as an educator, even off-campus.
- Courts increasingly view online speech as public and accessible, blurring lines between personal and professional contexts.

What Speech Can Be Restricted?

- Speech that:
 - Disrupts the workplace.
 - Undermines classroom effectiveness.
 - Damages professional relationships.
- Examples include inappropriate communication with students or vitriolic public posts about colleagues or the school.

“Immoral & Unprofessional” Conduct

- Under CA Ed Code §44932, educators are held to high moral standards.
- Discipline may result from:
 - Posts showing partying, drinking, or risqué behavior.
 - Sharing explicit content or student photos.
 - Context matters; what’s acceptable for others may be deemed inappropriate for educators.

Just Cause & Union Protections

- Permanent employees have “just cause” protections.
- Employers must prove that conduct adversely affects job performance.
- Remedies may be pursued via arbitration or labor boards.

Protecting Yourself Online

- Use common sense: assume anything posted is public.
- Set privacy settings to maximum.
- Avoid pseudonyms—they don’t guarantee anonymity.
- Use separate accounts for educational purposes.
- Keep interactions professional and school-related.



Need Help?

Contact your site representative for support regarding online conduct or disciplinary concerns.

For the full in-depth document, click here: [Social Media Info](#)