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WEAC Blogging Guidelines: 1.0

You must agree to these terms before participating in our Blog

The Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) believes in fostering a thriving online community and supports blogging as a valuable component of shared media. WEAC's Blog Guidelines have been developed for WEAC and the members who post comments on WEAC's Blog. They are also applicable for WEAC's members who post comments on the blogs of others. The guidelines outline some of the legal implications of blogging and also include recommended best practices to consider when blogging.



Legal Parameters: The following paragraphs discuss your general legal responsibilities and non-disclosure obligations. Failure to abide by these guidelines can result in serious ramifications for individual bloggers and/or individuals who post on the blogs of others.

Legal Liability

1. When you choose to go public with your opinions via a blog, you are legally responsible for your commentary. Individual bloggers can be held personally liable for any commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene (not swear words, but rather the legal definition of "obscene,") proprietary, or libelous (whether pertaining to WEAC, individuals, or any other company). For these reasons, bloggers should exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations. In essence, you blog (or post on the blogs of others) at your own risk. Outside parties actually **can** pursue legal action against you (not WEAC) for postings.
2. WEAC strongly recommends that you do not discuss any student's educational record, or other confidential information regarding any student, whether you identify the student or not, as you may violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and may subject yourself to discipline and/or discharge.
3. WEAC also strongly recommends that you not blog from your school computer as this could subject you to discipline and/or discharge.
4. WEAC reserves all rights to refuse to post any blog or remove any blog that violates these guidelines, violates WEAC policy, or is otherwise inappropriate.

Company Privileged Information

5. You may not blog regarding any confidential information related to WEAC's policy, strategy, financials, members, etc. You may not use the WEAC logo and/or trademarks in this blog, or in any other blog, without WEAC's express written permission.

Press Inquiries

6. Blog postings may generate media coverage. If a member of the media contacts you about a WEAC-related blog posting or requests WEAC information of any kind, contact WEAC PR (Dustin Beilke 608.298.2445 or beilked@weac.org). You should also reach out for PR clarification on whether specific information has been publicly disclosed before you blog about it.

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Blogging Best Practices

These four recommendations provide a roadmap for constructive, respectful, and productive dialogue between WEAC bloggers and their fellow members.

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This lottery hasn't been won yet!

Be Respectful of Your Colleagues

1. Be thoughtful and accurate in your posts, and be respectful of how other WEAC members and departments may be affected. All WEAC members can be viewed (correctly or incorrectly) as representatives of the union, which can add significance to your public reflections on the organization (whether you intend to or not).

Get Your Facts Straight

2. To ensure you are not misrepresenting WEAC or its work or positions consider reaching out to a member of the relevant team before posting. This courtesy will help you provide your readers with accurate insights, especially when you are blogging outside your area of expertise.

Provide Context to Your Argument

3. Please be sure to provide enough support in your posting to help readers understand your reasoning, be it positive or negative. We appreciate the values of multiple perspectives, so help us to understand yours by providing context to your opinion.

Engage in Private Feedback

4. Not everyone who is reading your blog will feel comfortable in approaching you if they are concerned their feedback will become public. In order to maintain an open dialog that everyone can comfortably engage in, WEAC bloggers are asked to welcome "off-blog" feedback from their colleagues and readers who would like to privately respond, make suggestions, or report errors without having their comments appear in your blog.

HOW TO PICK A FIGHT

One of the keys to a satisfying and productive career and life is to choose your battles wisely. According to Dr. Richard Carlson, best selling author of books on success, life is filled with opportunities to choose between making a big deal out of something or simply letting go and moving forward. How can you tell which battles are worth fighting - at work, in politics, in life? Here are some guidelines:

When Not to Fight:

- * You are trying to change people who have no interest in changing.
- * The outcome won't be materially different whether you win or lose.
- * The matter really isn't all that relevant or important to you.
- * You are not fully informed about the issue or fully convinced that your position is correct.
- * You have no chance of winning.
- * You have other priorities that are far more pressing.

- * You're just feeling surly or want to show others you're not a wimp.

When It's OK to Fight:

- * Your ideas are being diminished.
- * Your reputation is being sullied.
- * It's for the betterment of the organization.
- * You're standing up against action that is cruel or illegal.
- * Something legitimate or terribly important is at stake.
- * The issue involves integrity.
- * The issue involves a significant amount of money.

Successful people have an uncanny ability to know when to advance and when to retreat. It comes from having a mind set that is oriented toward making things work, not wasting time figuring out why things went wrong. Successful people are realistic, seek responsibility, tolerate ambiguity and are willing to make decisions and take action.

*From Kate Lorenz, MSN
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