



## Social Media Guidelines

The Alliance embraces the positive role that social networking sites can play in bringing Promise Fellows together, and recognizes the capacity that social media has in strengthening awareness, outreach and recruitment for AmeriCorps and the Promise Fellow program. However, we are also aware of the risks associated with the use of social media, especially when working directly with youth. These dangers can be avoided through diligence and professional discretion on the part of Promise Fellows. The following guidelines apply to individuals who comment, share, re-tweet, tweet or post information to any of Minnesota Alliance With Youth's social media platforms, or utilize their personal platforms to share information about their service as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow.

1. **BE TRANSPARENT.** Use your real name. Don't hide your identity or misrepresent yourself. Identify that you serve with Minnesota Alliance With Youth as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, but always specify that *"The opinions expressed here are not representative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth or AmeriCorps as organizations."*
2. **BE RESPECTFUL.** Never post negative, unflattering or untrue messages about a teacher, student, parent, administrator, co-worker, fellow AmeriCorps member, organization or school. Don't use insults, obscenities, or offensive/inappropriate language. Never post sexually explicit material. Avoid images promoting or displaying behavior such as smoking or drinking.
3. **RESPECT PRIVACY.** Show consideration for others' privacy and confidentiality. Do not share information about others that is sensitive or has been shared with you in confidence. Set your own privacy levels so that only "friends" can see your profile and content.
4. **DO NOT SHARE STUDENT INFO.** AmeriCorps Promise Fellows are prohibited from posting or sharing any identifying information about the youth you serve, including photos, first or last names, names of students' parents or family members, their address, or any descriptive language that would make their identity obvious to others.
5. **DON'T FRIEND STUDENTS!** Never approve current students as "friends" or "follow" students on your social media sites. Do not use social media to contact the parents of students, including the use of direct messaging.
6. **ADD VALUE.** Information you share about your service should be accurate and add value to the conversation. Before posting, ask yourself if the content is meaningful, useful or interesting.

7. **BE NICE.** When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that becomes antagonistic, disengage in a polite manner that reflects well on yourself and all Promise Fellows. Show common sense when discussing topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
8. **BE ACCURATE AND TRUTHFUL.** Pay attention to facts. When sharing others' posts, be sure to follow copyright and fair best use practices. Tag or name your sources.
9. **MIND YOUR MANNERS.** Ensure that your online content is consistent with how you would present yourself in person. When in doubt, DON'T!
10. **THINK AHEAD.** Your internet presence is often the first point of reference that the community has with your work as a Promise Fellow (AND that potential future employers may have of you!) Make sure that what you share is in accordance with the goals and values of the Alliance and our school/community sites.
11. **BE PREPARED!** Many of your students will try to find you online. Think about how you will answer when asked things like... "Why won't you approve my friend request?" "I didn't know you are (insert faith here)." "Who is that person with you in your profile picture?"
12. **COMPLY WITH AMERICORPS POLICIES:** AmeriCorps prohibits enrolled members from various activities, including trying to influence legislation or participating in or endorsing political events or activities, if you are doing so during service hours or while identifying yourself as an AmeriCorps member. When engaging in such advocacy efforts online, you should not identify yourself as an AmeriCorps member, use the AmeriCorps logo, nor be pictured wearing AmeriCorps gear.

If you have questions or concerns about your social media presence, or your participation on social media during your term of service, please contact Kate Suchomel, Director of Development & Communications at [ksuchomel@mnyouth.net](mailto:ksuchomel@mnyouth.net).