

### **Internet Searches Regarding Potential Employees**

Members of the Hitchcock County Schools' administrative team or of a hiring committee (hereinafter "the committee") may conduct internet research about job applicants by using the following protocol, except that no criminal history record information check shall be made until the school district has determined that the applicant meets the minimum employment qualifications:

1. The committee may Google candidates' full names and any aliases. Other search engines such as Yahoo or Bing may also be used. The committee may also search candidates' full names and any aliases on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, SocialMention and other social networking websites.
2. All applicants or all finalists must have the same research conducted about them. For example, if the committee conducts a search on Google using the name of one applicant in order to determine whether to include that applicant in the list of finalists, the committee must also conduct an identical search of all applicants' names.
3. The committee may not use deception to gain access to applicants' social networking pages, blogs or other on-line media.
4. The committee must take reasonable steps to verify the reliability of the information obtained in the search, including consulting with the applicant for confirmation of accuracy, if appropriate.
5. The committee will consider the following information to be relevant in making hiring decisions about an applicant based on information obtained through internet research:
  - a. Disparaging remarks made about current or former co-workers, supervisors or employers,
  - b. Discriminatory, harassing or demeaning behavior or comments,
  - c. Unprofessional, lewd or obscene behavior or remarks,

- d. Criminal activity
  - e. Information which indicates the applicant will or will not be able to perform the essential functions of the position sought,
  - f. Information which indicates that the applicant is particularly suited or unsuited to the position sought.
6. The committee will retain documents to demonstrate its compliance with this policy with other documentation relevant to the job search.

Hitchcock County Schools #44-0070  
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