

Justice Argument:

Justice demands that we treat equals equally and unequals unequally. The Lodi School District in California attempted to contract a social media policy with their students. This contract allows authority for the school district to regulate off-campus activity including the use of personal social media pages. This is unfair because personal social media pages are not an official representation of school activity. The Lodi School District unfairly compared the students' personal behavior outside of school to that behavior when representing the school. Those who are judging this case would be anyone who supports justice. Everyone should be judging this case.

Unequals should be treated unequally. Justice demands that we treat equals equally and unequals unequally to fairly distribute social and economic benefits and burdens. The situation that needs to be examined is the behavior and communication made by students. The criteria which applies to this situation is that of distributing the burden according to merit. The behavior a student displays on their personal time is different (unequal) than that of any behavior made by that student when representing their school and should be seen as different. Although the student may not be on school grounds when at "away" events, they are indeed representing a school related organization and should behave and communicate in a manner that is consistent with the school rules, philosophy, and expectations. Once that student leaves and is no longer a representative of the school, the manner in which he/she behaves should no longer be a concern of the school. For example, if a teenage boy was on the high school golf team, he'd be expected to be on his best behavior, follow all the course guidelines, as well as the team's rules and expectations because not only was he a guest of the golf course, but also a representative of his high school. But if that same teenage boy went to the same golf course with his dad, uncle, and cousin, he may goof off a bit, swear, and let off some energy while bonding with his family and the school should have no concern with his behavior.

A likely counterargument could be in an extreme case such as cyberbullying when the effects of off-campus cyberbullying may hinder one's ability to learn while at school. An intervention may be permitted, if the action of off-campus behavior has a direct impact on a student's ability to gain an education. For example, if a student is being exploited on another student's personal Facebook page for being overweight and being called horrific names on where other students can see then this can affect social interactions at school and disrupt the learning environment. The student may feel extremely emotionally saddened, especially if other students at school are laughing at him/her on campus over the specific matter. Even though it may not have happened at school, it can become a problem on campus and the problem will have to resolve at the root which may include disciplinary action for the bullying that was posted on a student's personal page.

Extracurricular physical 'away' events should not be treated the same as personal pages on social media, and therefore student's personal pages are not regulated by the school district. This is ethically better because the school has no authority over off-campus activities that are unrelated to school. Even if the school knew the student's behavior outside of school, they shouldn't be concerned because the students rarely act the same way at school as they do when they are at home. Although social media may be a concern for the school, it is not controlled by the school. Understanding that not all of the student's life and behavior is up for strict guidelines and monitoring of the school is ethical because when they are not representing the school, the students should not be a concern of the school.