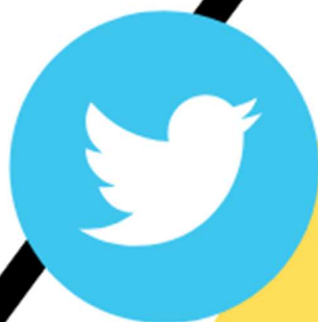


SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES*

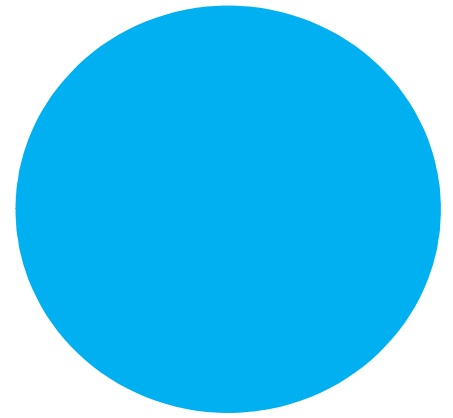


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***REVISED SEPTEMBER 2019**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Social Media Guidelines is to provide an aligned and straight forward set of expectations governing the practice and use of social media by Springfield Public Schools district, programs and school communication purposes.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PERSONAL USE BY SPS EMPLOYEES

The following guidelines address employees' use of social media networks including: Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks Facebook/ Twitter/ Snapchat and Instagram, online forums, apps, virtual worlds, and district approved social media. Please note that use of social media for personal use during district time or on district equipment is prohibited.

The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. When employees choose to join or engage with district students, families or fellow employees in a social media context that exists within or outside those approved by the district, they are advised to maintain their professionalism as an SPS employee.

Employees are responsible for what they post on their own sites and on the sites of others. In addition, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws or district policies. Individuals may be held liable for commentary deemed to be libelous, defamatory, obscene or similarly inappropriate or that compromises the information of students, families and staff. Even with the most rigorous privacy settings, when posting online comments that are related to school, students, families, staff or the district, even in a personal capacity, staff should act as if all comments/postings are in the public domain. Employees should remember that all online communications are stored and can be monitored. There is no such thing as a truly "private" social media site: search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date, comments can be forwarded or copied, and archival systems save information even if you delete a post.

If a staff member learns of information on a social networking site that falls under mandatory reporting guidelines, such reporting guidelines remain.

Staff must not post student information, pictures, videos or work product exemplars on personal social media sites, blogs, etc. Current parental consents apply only to district-sanctioned sites. Staff have the obligation to keep all student information private.

When using personal social media sites, if you identify yourself as an employee of the Springfield Public Schools, you must remember that you have associated yourself with the district; therefore, you must ensure that all associated content is consistent with the mission and work of the district.

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

The Office of Communication is the sole entity that may maintain a social media presence representing the district as a whole. The SPS Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter outlets shall post breaking news, weather closings, school-based and district wide news and other updates as deemed appropriate. However, SPS will not rely solely on social media for these communications. School closings and other urgent information will be relayed as appropriate via automated telephone services, the SPS website, and/or the news media as deemed appropriate. Additionally, the SPS Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter will serve as two-way communication.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, GROUPS AND PROGRAMS

Social media sites may be used to facilitate communication among groups of students, teachers/ parent and guardian, or school community stakeholders in support of instructional and school-sanctioned extra-curricular programs. This includes schools, PTOs, student organizations, etc.

A school's principal is the only person with the authority to authorize a school social media presence; for offices, departments and programs, the account must be authorized by the lead administrator, and so forth. **Staff must ensure that the social media tools they are using have been submitted to the principal/administrator for approval each school year.** Said staff member is expected to regularly monitor the social media site. In the case of student groups and PTO organizations, the account must be authorized by the principal, and monitored by at least one staff member.

Page managers must adhere to district policy when posting student pictures and using student names. Images, names or any details that include students whose parents have not signed a Student Media Release Form should not be posted. Additionally, parents should be informed of the social media tools being used and the expectations for appropriate behavior.

The Office of Communication has created a Social Media Registration Form required to be completed by all district related accounts. Such form is included in page 7 of this document. The principal/administrator or a designee should inform the Office of Communication of their social media tool in use. Please contact the Office of Communications if you need help to set up or have questions the usage of social media in our district.

When setting up an account, please note that all channels must be made available for public viewing. This means you may set up a Facebook Like Page, but not a Facebook group or a Facebook individual page as both are private; when creating an Instagram, it must be set to public, and so forth.

Our social media channels are not about any one individual. Be sure to employ the pronoun we. For example: *We are so excited to announce Mr. Bates' 5th grade classroom as the champions of our Attendance Challenge!*

Approved social media pages ought to be relevant, inclusive, consistent and of high quality social-media communication. Examples of acceptable content for social media include:

- News published from the district homepage or social media pages.
- Notifications and reminders of events for families to attend.
- Highlight student and staff achievement.
- Photos/videos of what students are currently working.
- Reminders of holidays, school calendar, report card schedule, etc.
- Rule of thumb: Share positive stories!

Before you set up a page, be sure to think of the following:

- Do we have a staff member who is willing and available to manage and monitor the page at least once a day?
- Are we committing to post on our social media regularly and frequently, as well as respond to messages and comments?
- The district requires all social media pages be constantly updated with content. Failure to comply may result in the the requirement to close such account.

In the event that a page administrator leaves their position within the school, department, group or district, the principal or lead administrator is required to remove such individual from the account. A good succession plan must be in place to enable a smooth transition.

GENERAL CONDUCT FOR DISTRICT-APPROVED SOCIAL MEDIA

- Page managers must monitor account for content that may be deemed to be libelous, defamatory, obscene, spam or similarly inappropriate or that compromises the information of students, families and staff.
- Content must be diverse and inclusive.
- Employees should be aware that they will be identified as working for representing the school in what they do and say online.
- Communication with the students should be professional and appropriate within the context of the teacher/student relationship.
- Communication with families should be professional and appropriate.
- Employees should not discuss students or coworkers publicly.
- Employees should not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.
- All laws pertaining to the SPS Acceptable Use Policy must be obeyed.

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SOCIAL MEDIA REGISTRATION FORM

School: _____

Year: _____

Teacher/Staff Name: _____

Department/Title: _____

Date: _____

I understand that I will be representing Springfield Public Schools online and that my use of social media in this context should be related to SPS instructional, communication or co-curricular purposes. I have read the SPS guidelines for social media use and agree to respect those measures.

Social Media you plan to use	URL, Page, Handle etc.	Instructional/Functional Purpose

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Administrative Approval by:

Print Name _____ Title _____

Signature _____ Date _____