**Osceola School District – Social Media Guidelines**

The Osceola County School District allows individual schools, district departments, teachers, and school-sanctioned clubs, groups, or teams to use online social media as an additional method of sharing information with families, students, staff, and other members of the community. This document contains guidelines to ensure that participants using social media understand and follow procedures that will make the use of online social media a positive and productive experience for everyone involved.

**A. Definitions**

“Social media” includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. These media provide information from various published sources and allow for interaction through user-generated content.

**B. Approved Social Media Sites**

These guidelines pertain to the following approved social networking sites:

• Facebook (http://www.facebook.com)

• Twitter (http://www.twitter.com)

• Instagram (http://www.instagram.com)

**C. Authorization for School or Department Accounts –** A school, department, teacher, or school-sanctioned club, group, or team account on any social media site must be authorized by both the principal/department administrator and the Community Relations Department. There can only be one official school/department social media account per approved social media site(s). Staff members maintaining unauthorized accounts will be required to deactivate the account or work with the Community Relations Department to authorize the account. Any school-sanctioned club, group, team, or teacher must have principal approval to have a social media site(s). This does not apply to personal social media accounts.

a. **Organize a school/department social media administrative team:**This team should include teachers, administrators, and/or staff who are already familiar with social media and understand the benefits that it will bring to your school/department. These individuals will contribute content and resources.

***Social Media Administrator:*** Assign one member of your team to post and one or two trusted others who will also keep track of the activity on the sites. The primary social media administrator should serve as the lead editor, so it is important for this person to have an eye for good grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

b. **Request permission for a school or department account(s):** Principals or department administrators must submit a request to the Community Relations Department in writing on **Form #231-2551** BEFORE setting up a social media account(s) for his or her school/department. The request must include the signature of the principal or department administrator, which indicates that he/she agrees to accept responsibility for maintaining appropriate content on the school- or department-approved social media site(s).

c. **Disclaimer:** The main page of each social media site shall indicate that it is the “Official site of <Name> School or Department.” All school and department social media sites must also include the Osceola School District’s Social Media Disclaimer as it states here: bit.ly/SDOCSocialDisclaimer.

d. **Username and password:**The username and password for all social media accounts should be maintained by the Social Media Administrative Team AND the schoolprincipal or department administrator. After submission of the social media request, the school or department will be assigned a generic emailaddress by the Community Relations Department. This email address must be used to create your school or department social media presence on Twitter and/or Instagram. This will ensure that the page is not tied to a person’s private account should they leave the school or department. Facebook Pages will be set up by the Community Relations Department and the team member who plans to manage the page will be given access through Facebook. If you have questions in regards to this process, please contact Janae Muchmore at janae.muchmore@osceolaschools.net or extension 66206.

When setting up Instagram and Twitter, be sure to set up a strong password using characters like $ % # \* & and numbers.

e. **Retention:** All school and district social media accounts, including all content, are public records. It is the responsibility of the social media administrator and team members to ensure that all public records are retained for the appropriate period of time. Content should be archived on a regular basis to ensure records are maintained and available when necessary.

f. **Affiliated Accounts -** Authorized school social media accounts shall maintain a clear separation from any social media accounts managed by school foundations, booster clubs, or parent-teacher groups, or other affiliated organizations. However, a link to school booster or parent-teacher group accounts is permissible. Principals may be responsible for some content on booster and parent group accounts, including, but not limited to, directing that district policies regarding fundraisers and fees be properly reflected on social media sites.

g. **Content Management**

A school’s or department’s social media administrative team is responsible for monitoring and maintaining authorized social media sites as described below:

a. **Legal compliance -** Content must conform to all applicable state and federal laws, as well as all district and board policies and administrative procedures.

b. **Timeliness -** Content must be kept current and accurate, and be refreshed at least weekly.

c. **Style -** All district or school-authored content should use correct grammar, spelling, and syntax.

d. **Copyrighted material -** Content must conform to copyright or intellectual property laws, and the content manager must secure the expressed consent of all involved parties for the right to distribute or publish recordings, photos, images, video, text, slideshow presentations, artwork or any other copyrighted materials.

e. **Student Photographs/Videos -** Thesocial media administrative team may not send, share, or post pictures, text messages, emails, or other material that identifies district students in electronic or any other form of personal technology without the written permission of the students’ parents or guardians. Please use the district photo release form for general photo release permission.

f. **Confidential Information -** Social media sites are a form of publication. Therefore, employees are prohibited from discussing students by name or by revealing any other information that might identify a student to a third party, including other students, faculty, staff, or community members, without parent permission. The prohibition includes grades, classroom performance, behavior, and all other confidential information. The social media administrative team may not use images of students, emails, or other personally-identifiable student information for personal gain or profit.

g. **Comments** - The purpose of these sites is to disseminate information on specific school and department topics. It is not intended to be a public forum. Comments posted to these sites must be monitored by the school or department. Individual schools or departments reserve the right to delete comments that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial, or religious groups. Further, the schools and departments reserve the right to delete comments that are:

* Spam or include links to other sites;
* Clearly off topic;
* Advocate illegal activity;
* Promote particular services or products;
* Infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
* Use personally-identifiable medical information;
* Obscene in nature or serve as an attack against any person or group;
* Promote the violation of school/district rules or substantial disruption of any school's orderly operation;
* Promote or oppose any person or party; and
* Promote or oppose any person campaigning for election to a political office or promote or oppose any ballot proposition.

Remember that comments and postings are subject to Florida’s broad public records laws. All posts are subject to the Terms of Service of the host site.

**D. Acceptable Use Policy**

Electronic communication using district technology is governed by the district’s Acceptable Use Policy. (School Board Rule 8.60+)

**E.** **Getting Your Facebook Page Started**

**Profile and cover pictures**

Your school’s profile picture should be your school logo and the cover picture can vary depending on events, activities, and programs that take place in your school during the school year.

**Settings**

Posting ability should be restricted. We recommend that you disable who can post on your timeline and who can add photos and videos.

**Private messages**

This feature should be turned off. While discussions are encouraged, this page is not intended to circumvent regular communication channels for sharing personal issues and concerns, including personnel matters and student concerns. If a parent needs assistance, they should contact the school by phone.
**Tagging**Avoid letting others tag photos and videos to your site. This will decrease inappropriate content or spam to be connected to your page.
**Notifications**
Allow your page to send a notification to the assigned email address that is connected to your Facebook Page. This will help your school meet records retention law requirements. Additionally, notifications will allow your Facebook administrators to see activity on your page.
**Profanity**
Set your profanity filter to Strong.

**Maintaining your Page**

Commit to at least weekly updates and gradually increase the amount of posts based on the needs of your followers. Keep in mind that social media changes; in addition, your school culture and policies change. Therefore, the social media administrative team should review your social media presence periodically, and make necessary changes.

**Reevaluate**

Determine if the time/resources invested were successful. Consider the amount of “Likes” or “Followers”, total reach of your page, people talking about your page, etc. and decide whether social media is increasing student and parental participation in your school activities, events, and programs.

**F. Getting your Twitter Page Started**

A Twitter page is easier to activate and manage than a Facebook page.

1. Select a username that is representative to your school/department. Keep your Twitter handles short. Twitter handles cannot be longer than 15 characters.

2. The email address connected to your school’s Twitter account should be the district-assigned email address.

3. You must use your school/department logo as your profile picture.

4. Remember the Twitter timeframe is instant. Therefore, consider tweeting throughout the day and at times when your followers are active in their social media. Tweets should also be a reflection of update status, pictures, and posts that can be found on your Facebook page.

**G. Tips for Social Media Posts**

**Valuable** – If it’s not interesting, informative, or entertaining, don’t post it.
**Timely** – Be sure to post at least once a week.
**Visual** – Albums, photos, and videos are effective ways to engage with your followers (Make sure any students who are posted have consent on file to be photographed/videoed for the current school year.)
**Concise** – Keep your posts to less than 250 characters/ Twitter is limited to 140 characters.
**Creative** – Speak genuinely and find your school’s voice.
**Current** – Keep track of events, holidays, and important dates, and create your own way to make them relevant to your audience.
**Hashtags** – Develop creative hashtags to promote your school, campus initiatives, and activities for the school.
**Celebratory** – Congratulate your students for their achievements… make them feel special (with parent consent). Highlight your students’ pictures, drawings, songs, slideshows, poems, etc. (with parent consent).
**Prepare** – Keep a schedule of posts - possibly a shared document where the members of your social media administrative team can provide input.
**Respond** – Followers expect and deserve replies to their comments and questions in a timely manner.
**Organize** – Consider using a tool to schedule and maintain your posts (e.g. Hootsuite). Posts can be scheduled days, weeks, and months out, which will also help with keeping the page timely without constant maintenance.
**Integrate** - Add social media icons to your school/department website, newsletters, and all publications.
**Have fun**- Your social media should be an extension of your customer service. Make your audience feel involved.

Organizations such as PTAs, PTOs, and SACs are not required to go through the district to have a page created, however it is strongly recommended that they speak to the principal before the page is established and that the school’s administrators follow the pages to ensure that the appropriate messaging is being shared and concerns and feedback can be addressed.

**The Community Relations Department will be happy to assist any school or department**

**in setting up their social media pages. You can contact Janae Muchmore at** **janae.muchmore@osceolaschools.net** **or extension 66206.**