



## **Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools: Social Media Communication**

### **Guidelines for Use of Social Media Tools**

Social media has become an indispensable tool to communicate with the community – and Facebook is by far the most popular for parent age stakeholders. According to a study conducted last year - more than 160 million Americans are on Facebook. 65% of those users are between the ages of 25 and 44 – meaning that’s where many of our parents can be found.

This information provides a guideline for the use of Social Media with a particular focus on Facebook as a communication tool. Users shall use all technology resources for educational or administrative purposes. Users shall not access inappropriate sites on the Internet or use school resources for personal, commercial, or financial gain. **See Internet Acceptable Use Policy IFBG / IFBG-R.**

*All who participate in the use social media as a functional and/or instructional tool are expected to understand and follow these guidelines.*

### **RULES FOR POSTING –**

The use of anonymous social media sites created in the name of the District, School or Classroom is not supported. This includes sites such as SnapChat or Yik Yak.

Maintaining professional boundaries on social media is critical to sustaining public trust and ensuring relationships with students remain professional.

What you write/post is your responsibility. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Information posted on School Social Media represents your school and the school district. All employees are expected to serve as positive ambassadors for their school or department. **All ethical expectations set forth in The Code of Ethics for Educators (GBU-E(1))** for employee/student relationships and communications shall apply in the use of social media for instruction or school communication.

Trademark, copyright, and fair use requirements must be respected.

Ensure the safety of students. The posting of student photos and all references to students must be compliant with SCCPSS Media Release forms and Directory Information requirements. Any student record protected under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) should not be posted and appropriately maintained under all existing policy, and state and federal law.

Respect your audience and your coworkers. Make sure your communications are in good taste. Do not denigrate or insult others, including other schools or competitors. Remember that our communities reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Be respectful and give proper consideration for privacy and topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

Be sensitive about linking to content. Redirecting to another site may imply an endorsement of its content. Be sure that all content is consistent with your work and with the District's beliefs and professional standards.

**The content test:** Are you adding value? There are millions of words out there. The best way to get yours read is to write things that people will value. Communication associated with our District should help fellow educators, parents, students, and co-workers. It should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community. If it helps people improve knowledge or skills, do their jobs, solve problems, or understand education better - it's adding value.

Make full use of privacy settings. Know how to disable anonymous postings and use moderating tools on your social media site(s).

### **DISTRICT (SCCPSS) FACEBOOK PAGE BASICS –**

- *Ownership:* The SCCPSS Facebook page will be administered by the SCCPSS Communications Division. District Communications staff will monitor the page to ensure it is properly updated and that offensive comments are removed or appropriately responded to.
- *Content Control:* The ability to tag the District page is turned off; THEREFORE, please alert District communications staff – either by Facebook message or email if your school page has a post - pictures, videos, events, etc. – that you would like shared on the District Page.
- *Purpose:* The District Page will be used as an informational tool to promote “Good News” about the district and our schools and will link to articles posted on the district website. It will also be used for event reminders, the sharing of information about district-level initiatives, and in the event of an emergency – i.e. School closures, school evacuation, etc. – to communicate with our families quickly and efficiently.

### **SCHOOL FACEBOOK PAGE BASICS –**

- *Ownership:* School Facebook pages will be administered by the School Principal or designee should they choose to use this medium as a communication channel. Administrators should be limited to no more than three individuals for posting and responding to content posted on the page. The School Principal will have final approval for content posting.
  - ✓ District Communications Staff must be included as an admin on your school page. The District Admin will take no role in daily posting or monitoring of your page – but would assist the school in updating the page appropriately during any emergency or crisis or transition in school leadership.

- *Content Control:* Pages are to be developed with the following settings:

*Visitor Posts should be disabled*

*Reviews are turned off*

*Only people who help manage your page can tag photos posted on it*

*People and other pages cannot tag my page*

*Profanity filter is set to STRONG*

*Under content distribution – Downloading to Facebook is not allowed*

*Posts: Public*

- **A student’s confidential information protected under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act must remain protected.**
  - **Ensure any image of a student that is posted has proper media release approvals and that students are uniform compliant.**
- *Purpose:* Facebook should be used by schools to communicate with parents and the community. Some examples include:
    - Good News/What's happening at your school/site;
    - Picture of the Day/Other school-related pictures;
    - School event reminders;
    - Congratulations on big accomplishments;
    - Notifications related to school operations; or
    - Emergency notifications (weather or otherwise)
    - Use Facebook/Social media to drive traffic back to your school website.

## **CLASSROOM FACEBOOK PAGE/SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS (Instructional Tool)**

- *Ownership:* Classroom Facebook pages and/or Social Media Tools will be administered by the classroom teacher after approval by the School Principal or designee. The teacher social media page must be set up as a page that represents the school and classroom where the educator is located.
  - **Teachers/staff should refrain from using their personal Facebook or social media pages as an instructional or communication tool with students.**
  - **Classroom pages should be shut down if an educator moves to a new location or is no longer employed with the school district. Any account that misrepresents its affiliation is subject to the Policy and Safety requirements established by Facebook.**

**Remember:** The use of anonymous social media sites created in the name of the District, School or Classroom is not supported. This includes sites such as SnapChat or Yik Yak.

Maintaining professional boundaries on social media is critical to sustaining public trust and ensuring relationships with students remain professional.

- *Content Control:* Pages are to be developed with the following settings:

*Visitor Posts should be disabled  
Reviews are turned off  
Only people who help manage your page can tag photos posted on it*

*People and other pages cannot tag my page  
Profanity filter is set to STRONG  
Under content distribution – Downloading to Facebook is not allowed  
Posts: Public*

- *Purpose:* Facebook/Social Media should be used by classrooms as an instructional tool. Some examples include:
  - Good News/Classroom Projects;
  - Classroom reminders;
  - Collaboration for student/group projects;
  - Class surveys/polls;
  - Research;
  - Promote the school Facebook/Social media and web page.
- **Confidential information protected under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act must remain protected.**

## **Questions?**

**Contact the SCCPSS Office of Communications**

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