

McGregor ISD Social Media Best Practices for Employees

The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning and sharing in the social media environment is part of our evolving social world. The district has created this list of "best practices" as a resource for employees that will give direction when participating on social media platforms.

Using Social Media to Represent the District

Before creating or using a social media site, a district employee must receive approval from their campus principal and the district technology director. Employees should also consider the following:

- Who is the target audience for your site?
- What information are you attempting to communicate?
- Who will be responsible for managing and monitoring this site and will this person represent the campus/district appropriately?

The only social media platforms approved by the district for employees to use are **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube**. If an employee site is approved and created, it must be immediately registered with the district technology director in order to be compliant with SB 944 and archiving requirements.

Employee Responsibilities with Personal Social Media Sites

- Be mindful of the information you post - even if you delete that information, it will still be stored on the website's server for a long period of time.
- Ensure that the content associated with you online is consistent with your work and professional ethics at MISD.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that security and privacy settings are in place for your sites (both personal and professional) so that your content is viewed only by your intended audience; do not assume "privacy".
- Do not "friend", "follow" or otherwise interact with students from your personal social media accounts - this not an appropriate forum to have communication between staff and students.
- Do not communicate with families regarding MISD matters through your personal social media accounts.
- Do not post student information or pictures of any students on your personal sites.

Employee Responsibilities with Professional Social Media Sites

- Professional social media sites should be limited to instructional, educational or extra-curricular activities. Posts should remain relevant to the classroom, campus, and/or district.
- Remember that social media in the classroom is an extension of your physical classroom. What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.
- Employees are personally responsible for the content published online. Posts should be positive, accurate, and in support of the district. If you see an error in your post, correct it quickly.
- You must not post identifiable student information or photos without parental consent. Do not post movies, photos, etc., or tag any photos or movies without parental consent.
- Do not share confidential information whether it is internal campus discussions or specific information about students or staff.
- Always use professional judgement when interacting with parents and students in an educational manner on your professional social media site(s).
- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. Cite your sources when quoting and ensure all hyperlinks launch and provide appropriate content.

- Professional posts containing any campus or district logo must contain the official logo. Please request the logo you would like to use from the Tech Department or your campus principal.

Always Remember; you are a School Employee

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. Whether it is clearly communicated or not, you will be identified as an employee of MISD in what you do and say online. Your online behavior must reflect the same standards of professionalism, respect and integrity as your face-to-face communications.

Positively Represent your School

Represent the district, campus, students and parents you serve in the best light. Respect the privacy and feelings of others. Your posts and comments should help build and support the school community. Do not comment on or forward unsupported information. You are responsible for what you post.

Share your Expertise

Write what you know to be accurate. Add value to the discussion. Post something useful and worthwhile.

Confidential Information

Online posts and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information whether it is internal school discussions or specific information about students or staff. What you post will be seen by others and will be online for a long time. It can also be forwarded or shared in a few clicks. Do not write about colleagues or students without their expressed permission.

Responding to Negative Comments or Criticism

How you respond to a negative comment or criticism will say more about you and your character than what you post. It is best not to give it credibility by acknowledging it with a public response.

Post Regularly to your Professional Site

Readers won't have a reason to follow you if they cannot expect new content regularly. Respond to other's posts. Answer questions and thank people even if it's only a few words. Keep your professional site up-to-date and informative.

Spell Check and Grammar

Any online contribution should be well written. What you post will be online for the world to read. Use proper grammar, capitalization and punctuation. Be cautious about using common abbreviations. While your circle of friends may understand what you are saying, other readers may not.

Copyright and Fair Use

Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. Share what others have said by linking to the source and using embedded content. Be sure to cite your source when quoting. When using a hyperlink, confirm the link launches the intended website and the content is appropriate.

Personal Information

Be careful about sharing too much personal information such as, where you grew up, parents and children's names, pet names, etc. You don't want to assist a hacker in guessing your password. Be cautious when sharing that you will be out of town. Be smart and use good judgement with the personal information you choose to share.