



District Web Site and Social Media Guidelines

Purpose:

Social media and web site use can lead to increased brand awareness, community engagement, reputation management, recruiting, networking, and access to education and resources. We can measure the amount of engagement with fans and followers, the number of tweets and the number of complaints. Based on this data, we can measure the value of this interaction. By using a strong and deliberate social media and web site strategy, Charlotte Public Schools can and will see positive results.

Facebook: is a social-networking site where users can add friends, send messages, and build their own profiles. This is where Charlotte Public Schools will want to drive social interaction with their community members. Positive or negative, CPS can use Facebook to reach our target audience, receive feedback and strengthen our brand awareness.

Twitter: is a microblogging site that enables users to send “tweets” or messages of 140 characters or less. CPS can communicate with our audience in a quick, to the point way, allowing for simple monitoring and management of conversations. The real impact of Twitter doesn’t necessarily come from what we say about our brand, but from what others say about CPS. Retweets and interactions can do more for our brand than any other social media site.

Target Audience:

A younger generation, typically between the ages of 18 and 34 are those that are most involved with social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. These people are the most difficult to advertise to because they watch fewer television commercials, subscribe to fewer periodicals and listen to less radio than those outside of this age group. Therefore, it is imperative that organizations use multiple media outlets to gain this groups attention. Viral marketing, blogs, Twitter, and Facebook are just a few ways in which this younger generation expects to gain information. Web sites are the most common source of information for our parents and community and can be a great way for us to communicate a variety of information.

When social media is done correctly, relationships will build naturally. The intent of the use of social media, among many other communication and marketing tools, is to strategically and deliberately communicate information of interest to stakeholders; retain students, staff, and their families at Charlotte Public Schools; recruit new students, staff, and their families to Charlotte Public Schools; and communicate emergency information when appropriate.

Goals and Objectives:

- Develop and enhance the presence of Charlotte Public Schools on social media
- Increase the number of followers
- Accurately convey the Charlotte Public Schools brand

- Engage current/potential families, staff, and students

Rules of Engagement:

- Listen before reacting/acting
- Always identify who you are
- Always be factual and truthful
- If you don't know a factual answer, find one & don't reply until you do
- Be professional at all times
- Show sincerity
- Care about the parent/student/family
- Clearly state the hours the page is monitored

Negative Feedback:

We all know that someone is going to leave Charlotte Public Schools a negative comment at some point in time and there is no way we will ever be able to avoid this completely. Deleting or removing these comments is not necessarily the answer because that may escalate issues in different locations (blogs, forums, etc.). When these situations arise, it is critical that they are dealt with promptly.

- Home court advantage allows us to quickly find out what issues are being discussed and why, and give us the opportunity to address the problem right away. Any negative feedback on social media should almost be considered a "free alerting system." Administration can take the feedback, discuss internally, and, if appropriate, put a plan together to make sure that this issue doesn't come up again.
- More times than not, those that leave a negative comment aren't trying to damage our image. In fact, they may just be trying to bring attention to a problem that they have encountered so that a solution can be provided. Therefore, it is very important that we embrace these comments and show its involvement in providing a solution.
- By acknowledging these problems and providing solutions in public shows how transparent and open to community input the District is. If handled appropriately, the end result could be a very positive and beneficial experience.

Suggested Content - Facebook:

- School district information, link to website
- Add pictures of employees and events
- Content shall at all times be positive and supportive of Charlotte Public Schools, it's programs, staff and students.
- Update with:
 - Newsletter information
 - New employees
 - Greetings
 - Upcoming events
- Encourage employees to add CPS as their place of work and engage on the page in an appropriate manner
- **Make sure to take off tagging so students' names are not included in the post.**

Suggested Content – Twitter:

- Short information, link to website
- Encourage employees to follow CPS

- Content shall at all times be positive and supportive of Charlotte Public Schools, it's programs, staff and students.
- Update with:
 - Links to important school activities with subject matter
 - Greetings
 - Preview upcoming events with links to more information
- Use hashtags like #CharlottePublicSchools, #OriolePride, #CharlotteOrioles to promote our Tweets to a broader audience
- Drive to Facebook and the Charlotte Public Schools website through either:
 - Posts with links back
 - Automatic Twitter to Facebook set up
- **Make sure to take off tagging so students' names are not included in the post.**

Suggested Content – Web Site:

- School district factual information
- Events, updates, newsletters
- Photos of student activities, staff, and projects
- Direct visitors to District social media sites/cross promote
- Do not include student photos with name tags or other identification
- Do not promote activities outside of Charlotte PS unless you are sharing it from the main district site or have express permission from administration
- Content shall at all times be positive and supportive of Charlotte Public Schools, it's programs, staff and students.

When to Delete Comments:

Comments should be deleted that contain:

- Hate speech
- Profanity
- Nudity
- Defamation
- Name calling
- Spam
- Private staff or student information

In an Emergency:

During an emergency, people will seek information wherever they can find it. Charlotte Public Schools wants to be timely in any and all responses on all social media accounts. If we do post during an emergency, information being posted cannot contradict local authorities – during this time, only the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will be tasked with posting information.

Do's and Don't's....

Do's...

- Do give guidelines to anyone who will be contributing to our blog or social media accounts OR who has been given permission to establish a district related account.
- Do reinforce our traditional school district philosophies with our online efforts and vice versa.

- Do build up a network of friends among school district families BEFORE we start trying to “market” to them.
- Do use social media to start conversations among families about our school district and ask for honest feedback.
- Do put fun and interesting events onto Facebook.
- Do write your posts in a way that invites families to comment on it.
- Do understand that families expect you to be present in the online conversation. They will interpret lack of presence as a lack of caring about their concerns.
- Spell check, proof read, spell check, proof read, and do it again!!
- Have a set schedule. For example...
 - Mondays = important events for the week
 - Fridays = Fun Fact Friday

Don'ts...

- Don't spam families.
- Don't use a condescending tone of voice.
- Don't make posts too long where people don't want to read them.
- Don't try to use slang to appear cooler than you really are.
- Don't release names of students or personal information of students, families, or staff.
- Don't identify minors in photos.
- Don't think that social media and traditional marketing are an either/or situation. The best campaigns utilize both types when and where appropriate.
- Don't forget to have some fun with your families.

Example Comments and Responses:

Comment	Response	Note
We just moved into the Charlotte Public Schools area and want to know what the first step is for getting our child enrolled?	We are happy to assist you. Please call our district registrar's office at (517) 541-5742 or visit our website at www.charlottenet.org and click on the Student Enrollment icon.	We want to make sure to take this type of question offline as soon as possible so to not set the precedent that social media channels are equivalent to our school district inquiry channels.
@CPS thank you so much for supporting “xyz” cause. You are setting a wonderful example for the community.	Thanks “name!” We are happy to help support such a great cause. Are there other ways you would like to see us help the community?	Take advantage of opportunities to turn a positive into something greater by showing additional comment or turning the question back to the person making the original comment.
Why is the sky blue?	No response	Remember that our entire community is watching. These are great opportunities to show the best qualities of our culture and brand.

CPS DISTRICT SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES....CONTINUED

<p>Did you know that there is a grant available for XYZ program?</p>	<p>Thank you for letting us know about this opportunity. We will certainly take the time to research this further. Please let us know if you have any other suggestions for additional grant opportunities.</p>	<p>Be sure to always say thank you to show that you are listening and value the input.</p>
<p>Where can I find information about XYZ event?</p>	<p>Please visit our website at www.charlottenet.org for the most current schedule of events.</p>	<p>Continue to emphasize and direct followers to our web site where they can find most information.</p>