

Best Practices for School Social Media Use

RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Disclaimer Regarding Social Media Use in Schools:

Rugby Public Schools recognizes the increase use of social networking sites, including but not limited to Facebook Twitter, Instagram, Google+, etc., for sharing information among individuals and groups. RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS encourages social networking Best Practices which support the safety and dignity of all individuals. Persons who create Teacher, Class or Group Social Media pages or accounts that represent RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS staff, groups, teams or organizations, are solely responsible for the monitoring, maintenance, and use of the pages until it has been deactivated or until admin access has been transferred to another individual.

- It is required that any staff desiring to start a Social Media page for a school group must fill out a RPS Social Media Account Request form and have it approved *before* the account is activated for student participation
- While the district does not limit use of Social Media in the classrooms, the buildings may have guidelines or rules not included here.
- It is required that parents are notified regarding the intended use of Social Media as part of classroom communication.
- Staff are not allowed to share the Social Media account username/password combination with students.

Social Media Age Requirement & Targeted Social Media Advertising

- Many Social Media sites have age limits for use. For example, Facebook user agreements require that users be at least 13 years of age to join. Any and all profiles, groups, or pages created that represent a Rugby Public Schools employee, group, school, organization, or team are expected to comply with all aspects of the user agreement, including not “friending” or “adding” anyone known to be under the age of 13.
- Many Social Media sites collect user information and then target ads based on preferences and browsing history. The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) limits the collection of user information on children under the age of 13. For this reason, RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS staff may not have students under the age of 13 interacting on a classroom or group Social Media page.

Opt Out

It is required by law that RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS have a policy in place regarding parents being able to Opt Out their child from Directory Information. If the child has been opted out, the directory information cannot be publicly published without prior written consent of the parent. Opt out information includes student name, address, phone number, parents’ names, date and place of birth, gender, participation in activities and sports, grade level, photograph, weight

and height of members of athletic teams, dates of enrollment/attendance, diplomas and awards received, and most recent RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS school attended.

Status Updates/Posting Pictures/Friending

- Consider what you are posting on your page and do not post it if others may be offended.
- Be aware of any students that are on the OPT OUT list.
- Avoid tagging in status updates and pictures.
- Students and staff members using social media should be cautious in communicating with these technologies. The separation between the role of a public educator and a personal friendship with students should always be visible and strongly communicated. For example, Facebook friending is strongly discouraged unless there is a legitimate educational need as determined by district administration or the student is a family member.

Comments from Other Users

- Be aware of what comments students and others may be posting on your page.
- If something posted is offensive or questionable, delete the comment and block the user if necessary.
- Use any questionable student comments as a teachable moment and hold students accountable for what they post.
- Ask parents not to tag comments or pictures on the Social Media page and let them know that any tags will be removed. The page owner (RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS staff) must daily monitor and remove tags or have your security settings set so that users cannot tag themselves.

Sharing Admin Access to Social Media Accounts

All Social Media Accounts that are associate with our school shall be prepared to provide the login information to school administration if requested. *It is strongly advised that staff members create a generic social media account for their group/organization that is separate from their personal account.

Terms of Use Statement

It is recommended that you include a Terms of Use in the Info section of your account. Below are the contents of the RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Social Media Terms of Use. Feel free to copy and modify to fit your page:

In ABOUT section: TERMS OF USE

In DESCRIPTION section:

The [Name of Page] is maintained by [enter school or department name here].

The administrators for this page reserve the right to monitor all comments and if necessary, remove any inappropriate posts. The purpose of this practice is to maintain the sense of professionalism in our district community, as well as to protect the rights and privacy of all RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS students and employees.

We comply with all federal and state regulations regarding the online safety and privacy of minors. We will not knowingly post, solicit, or communicate in any way through this page with children under the age of 13.

By posting to the [Name of Page] Facebook page, participants:

- recognize that they are subject to having their comments, name, and profile picture publicly visible.
- will not post anything that is illegal. This includes adhering to all copyright and fair use laws.
- will not use any language that is considered abusive, lewd, or inappropriate for a school community.
- will not post anything that can be considered harassing or bullying. Any such posts will be reported to the appropriate authority.
- shall respect our staff and students by not posting any comments that are personally defamatory.
- will not post spam.

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Staff Members Communication With Students Regulations

Electronic Communications

Electronic communications between staff and students should always be Transparent, Accessible and Professional (**TAP**) as defined below:

1. The communication is **TRANSPARENT**: All digital communication between staff and students should be transparent. As a public school district it is expected to maintain openness, visibility and accountability with all communications.
2. The communication is **ACCESSIBLE**: All digital communication between staff and students shall be considered a matter of the student's educational record, part of the district archives, and/or may be accessible by those with a right to access such records under FERPA.
3. The communication is **PROFESSIONAL**: All digital communication from staff to students should be written as a professional representing the RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. This includes word choice, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards, and integrity of the profession.

Off-duty electronic communication with a student who is an employee's family member are exempt from the above requirements.

Communication Methods

Any content staff members publish, pictures they post, or dialogue they maintain within any social media, or blog, should never compromise their professional integrity or ethics in their role as a professional employed by RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Restrictions Contained in Other District Policies

The District has created policies governing student-staff relations, confidentiality, and employee speech. These policies govern on- and off-duty conduct, including when engaged in electronic communications.

Online Comments about the District

Personnel are not authorized to speak on behalf of the District in an official capacity, without prior consent by the administration. Any opinions or comments about the District and related programs should clearly acknowledge that the comments are their personal opinions and do not reflect the opinions of the district.

Enforcement

The District will not actively monitor websites and electronic communication to ensure employee compliance with this policy but shall investigate any suspected or alleged violation of this policy.

RPS Social Media Account Request Form

All Rugby Public Schools staff members using social media sites to communicate with students or parents must adhere to all applicable laws, district policies, and the district social media guidelines, including Rugby Public Schools Best Practices for School Social Media use.

Employee Name: _____

Account Type and Name (ie., Twitter, RHS Student Council)

Email Address to be associated with the account: _____

By signing below,
I am indicating I have read the RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Best Practices for School Social Media Use policy and agree to adhere to those requirements when managing my school affiliated account. I also agree to turn over the login and password information to the social media account if requested in the case of an investigation.

Staff Member Signature

Date

Request Approved by Administration

Request Disapproved/More Information Needed

Principal Signature

Date

Technology Coordinator Signature

Date