



# SHADY SIDE

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## A C A D E M Y

### **Social Media Policies for Senior School Teams, Clubs and Groups**

Shady Side Academy recognizes the importance of social media as a communications tool and is supportive of Senior School teams, clubs and groups who wish to use social media in a positive and appropriate manner to communicate with parents, friends, alumni and fans. The following policies are for Senior School teams, clubs or groups who wish to manage their own social media accounts. Social media outlets include, but are not limited to: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, etc.

*Country Day, Junior and Middle School teams, clubs and groups are not permitted to have social media accounts.*

#### **Expectations**

Any social media account that identifies itself as being affiliated with Shady Side Academy must adhere to the Academy's Guiding Principles, the Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), the Student-Parent Handbook and this document. An SSA-affiliated account is defined as any account using the words Shady Side Academy, Shady Side or SSA in its name or profile description, or using an SSA-related profile image. SSA-affiliated accounts are a reflection on the Academy as a whole, so it is expected that students and faculty who manage the accounts will share information, photos, videos, etc. in a positive and responsible manner.

#### **Procedures for Establishing an Account**

##### **1. Secure Coach/Advisor Permission AND a Faculty Sponsor**

Any team, club or group wishing to have an SSA-affiliated social media account must first get permission from their head coach or faculty advisor in writing via email. *Coaches and advisors reserve the right to deny permission for social media accounts.* If the coach/advisor grants permission, a faculty sponsor must be secured for the account. The faculty sponsor must be an SSA faculty member. In most cases, the sponsor will be one of the team's coaches or the club's advisor. Athletic teams that do not have any coaches who are also faculty members must find a faculty member outside the coaching staff who is willing to sponsor their account.

Faculty sponsors are expected to:

- Know the account username and password
- Know which student(s) is/are managing the account
- Notify the SSA Communications Office of the account
- Monitor the account regularly
- Delete inappropriate posts if needed

If an account does not have a faculty sponsor, it may not use the school's name or images and should be clearly identified as a personal account not affiliated with the school.

##### **2. Decide Who Will Manage the Account**

A student may handle day-to-day management of the account, such as posting updates. However, the faculty sponsor must know which student(s) is/are managing the account at all times. The sponsor must also have the account username and password in order to access the account if needed, and to pass the account information on to another student when the previous student graduates or leaves the group.

### 3. Set Up the Account Using an SSA Email Address

All SSA-affiliated social media accounts should be set up using a student or faculty shadysideacademy.org email address as the primary account owner. Do not use a personal email address.

### 4. Choose an Account Name and Profile Image

Only official Shady Side Academy social media accounts managed by the SSA Communications Office may use the full school name “Shady Side Academy” and the SSA seal or logo as a profile image. Teams, clubs and groups are encouraged to use “SSA” or “Shady Side” in the account name, such as “SSA Speech & Debate” or “Shady Side Baseball.” Choose a profile image that conveys a positive image of the team/club/group, but do not use the school seal by itself in order to avoid confusion with official school accounts. Teams and clubs are encouraged to use the SSA Bulldogs spirit and athletic logos as a profile image, including the bulldog head or the SSA monogram.

### 4. Notify the Communications Office

Once a social media account has been established, the faculty sponsor must notify Director of Communications Jen Roupe at [jroupe@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:jroupe@shadysideacademy.org) and Web and Social Media Manager Megan Grguras at [mgrguras@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:mgrguras@shadysideacademy.org) with a link to the account. Team, club and group accounts must allow the official Shady Side Academy account to follow or subscribe to their account. All SSA-affiliated accounts will be monitored by the Communications Office as well as by the faculty sponsor.

## Posting to Your Account

### Frequency

Teams, clubs and groups are encouraged to post at least once a week while the group is active or in-season. Three to five times a week is ideal. Teams are encouraged to post results and updates from games and tournaments on the same day so their followers are the first to know.

### Voice

Use a casual, conversational voice. Remember that you are speaking on behalf of your team or group, not yourself. Refrain from posting your own personal opinions and comments – those should be posted on your personal account, not the team or group account.

### Appropriate and Inappropriate Content

All posts must adhere to the school’s Guiding Principles, Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Student-Parent Handbook. Remember that any content posted on social media is available to the public, including the media. Ask yourself the following questions before posting:

- Would I want my parents, grandparents, teachers and younger siblings to read this post?
- Would I want the media to read this post and possibly quote it in a news story?
- Does it convey a positive image of SSA and my team/club/group?
- To the best of my knowledge, is the information I’m posting factual?

According to the AUP, *“inappropriate communication is prohibited in any public messages, private messages or material posted online by students. Inappropriate communication includes but is not limited to the following: obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language or images typed, posted or spoken by students; information that could cause damage to an individual or the school community or create the danger of disruption to the academic environment; personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks; harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking of others; knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization; and communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons of other destructive devices.”*

## **Photos and Videos**

Photos and videos are a great way to engage social media followers, especially photos that you take of your team or group at a game, practice or activity. Do not post copyrighted photos or videos on any SSA-affiliated accounts – it's illegal and violates the Guiding Principle of honesty. Use extreme care when posting photos and videos. Do not post photos of anyone without their knowledge or permission. If you think someone may object to you posting their photo, or may be embarrassed by it, do not post it.

## **Legal and Safety Considerations**

You may be liable for publicly posting content that is illegal. Remember to keep the safety and privacy of our students and teachers in mind.

- Do not post copyrighted material, images or music.
- Do not post false, defamatory, libelous or obscene information, commentary or photos.
- Do not post threats of intimidation or violence, even if it is meant as a joke.
- Do not publish information that could lead to identity theft or safety concerns, including an individual's social security number, date of birth, home address, home or cell phone number, etc.

## **Best Practices**

### **Content Is King**

Post relevant, timely and interesting content. Let your followers be the first to know how your team or group did at a game or event instead of waiting until the next day to hear about it at school or on the web. Be consistent in posting scores, news and updates to keep your followers engaged. Give followers a behind-the-scenes peek into the life and personality of your group or team.

### **Share Good News**

Social media is a great way to share good news. Use your account to announce team or student achievements or awards, and to give shout-outs to students, coaches and teachers who deserve them.

### **Be Honest**

Honesty is always the best policy. Share only information you know to be factual. If you post something that is incorrect, or feel that your words may have been misinterpreted, post a correction immediately and apologize.

### **Be Respectful**

Always be respectful of your teammates or group members, your teachers and coaches, your school, officials and your competitors in your posts. Do not trash-talk opposing players or schools, or "vent" about a frustrating loss or bad call in your posts. If you are upset or mad after a game or event, wait until you cool down to post, or ask your coach or advisor to post for you.

### **Negative Comments**

If someone posts a negative comment or response on your page, don't delete it unless it involves profanity or inappropriate content. Either ignore it or address it in a positive and honest manner. Don't get into an argument online. Report any threatening comments to your coach or faculty advisor immediately.

### **Keep It Going**

Don't let the team/group account die when the student managing it graduates. If the account was set up using the above guidelines, the faculty sponsor will be able to pass the account information on to another student, and you'll maintain the audience of friends and fans you've worked so hard to gain for years to come.

## **Questions?**

If you have questions regarding these guidelines or SSA-affiliated social media accounts, please contact SSA Web and Social Media Manager Megan Grguras at [mrgrguras@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:mrgrguras@shadysideacademy.org) or 412-447-2243.