

Excellence Community Schools

Social Media Policy

At Excellence Community Schools our staff members use social media platforms to connect with prospective families, current families, scholars and alumni. This may include promotional materials, educational content, and school activities, amongst others.

Excellence Community Schools takes social media seriously. Faculty, staff, and scholars are all expected to show respect and to take the privacy of others into careful consideration. In recognition of the public and pervasive nature of social media communications, the lines between professional and personal endeavors are sometimes blurred, these Guidelines also address recommended practices for use of personal social media by staff

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, and Flickr.

The tools we use are primarily Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter



APPLICABILITY

Guidelines below apply to all Excellence Community schools staff and faculty members. School leadership will take steps to ensure that other stakeholders including vendors, volunteers and contractors or informed of these guidelines.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

1. Maintenance of Separate Professional and Personal E-mail Accounts

Excellence Community Schools staff who engage in professional social media activities should maintain separate professional and personal email addresses. The Excellence Community Schools social media presence should utilize the ECS email address and should be separate from any personal social media presence maintained by staff members.

2. Communication with Scholars

ECS staff that work with scholars and communicate through professional social media sites should follow these guidelines:

- Professional social media sites that are school-based should be designed to address reasonable instructional, educational or extra-curricular program matters
- Professional social media sites that are non-school based should have a reasonable relationship to the mission and function of the ECS Department responsible for creating and maintaining the site
- ECS Staff should not communicate with current scholars on personal social media sites. This is subject to the following exceptions:
 - a. Communication with relatives
 - b. If in an emergency that requires communication via social media
- Each school year, ECS parents will be notified about the professional social media activities their children will be invited to participate in. We will inform parents of the purpose and nature of each social media platform their children will access and will instruct parents to contact the school with any questions or concerns
- To the extent possible, based on the social media site being used, ECS Leadership or their designees should be given administrator rights or access to the professional social media accounts established by ECS Staff
- Staff will be required to obtain ECS Leadership approval before setting up a professional social media presence

3. Guidance Regarding Social Media Sites

a. Professional

Excellence Community Schools staff should use common sense, professional judgement, and caution

- Social media communication should be in compliance with existing state, federal and local, intellectual property laws, Children’s Online Privacy Protection (COPPA) as well as Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA) including, but not limited to, prohibitions on the disclosure of confidential information and prohibitions on the use of harassing, obscene, discriminatory, defamatory, or threatening language.
- EC staff should treat professional social media space and communication like a classroom and/or a professional workplace. The same standards expected as if a particular type of behavior is inappropriate in the classroom or the workplace then that behavior is also inappropriate on any social media platform.
- No personally identifiable student information may be posted by ECS Staff on social media sites, including scholar photographs, without the consent of the scholars’ parents
- Excellence Community School scholars who participate in professional social media sites may not be permitted to post photographs featuring other scholars

b. Personal

Excellence Community Schools staff should not give scholars personal contact information with regards to social media platforms.

- Staff are encouraged to use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal media sites. There is an individualized responsibility to understand the rules of the social media platform being utilized.
- ECS Staff should not “tag” photos of other employees, contractors or vendors without their prior permission of individuals being tagged
- The posting or disclosure of personally identifiable student information or confidential information via personal social media platforms is prohibited
- Banned communication includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Friending
 - b. Following
 - c. Commenting
 - d. Posting

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- If you use personal social media platforms, please take immediate steps to remove current ECS scholar from your list. Refuse or ignore requests from any ECS Scholars to join social media networks

EXPECTATIONS FOR ECS FACULTY AND STAFF

As a member of the Excellence Community Schools community, you are expected to act professionally on social media. If you wish to post any content of your classes, practices, or in-school interactions on social media, please send to EIT@excellenceschools.org for proper review to be posted to the Excellence Community Schools accounts. Never use photos of scholars on your own personal accounts.

Privacy Protection

To ensure the safety of our community, Excellence Community Schools will never post or release information that is considered private and confidential. This includes posting conversations, names, personal schedules, addresses, phone numbers, etc. without noted consent.

Photos of scholars will not be posted on Excellence Community Schools social media accounts if a parent specifically opts their child(ren) out of such communications. Unless otherwise opted out, scholars are automatically opted in.

Scholars, faculty, and staff should similarly respect each other's confidential information in addition to ECS' brand and copyrighted material.

Responding to Comments

Whether positive or negative, it is important for Excellence Community Schools to respond to comments on our social media posts. Responses to comments or questions asked by community members are only to be made by the [External Affairs](#) and CMO Leadership team on a case by case basis.

Posting During a Crisis

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In a crisis situation, you as an Excellence Community Schools staff member are strongly discouraged from using social media to make a statement. Posting a personal statement or opinion on social media regarding a district-related topic might also violate school policy. A formal press release will be created by the [CMO Leadership](#) team. Depending on the situation, a social media post may also be shared by the [External Affairs](#).

EXPECTATIONS FOR ECS SCHOLARS

As a scholar of Excellence Community Schools you are welcome to participate in interactions with the school online. You are expected to employ responsible behavior, and any disrespect to the school or to your peers — in addition to posting photos of other scholars without consent — will result in disciplinary action.