



## Sherman ISD Social Media Guidelines

Sherman ISD is aware of the power of social media, and our goal is always to maintain a positive online image at all times. As a district, we are adopting the following social media rules and guidelines for faculty and staff to adhere to as they manage personal social media accounts as Sherman ISD employees.

### WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication. This includes but is not limited to social networks, blogs, photo-sharing platforms, internet websites, internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Flickr, Edmodo, Schoology and many more.

### Rules

All rules are expected to be followed by all district employees. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

- **Maintain Professional Conduct:** Your online behavior must reflect the same standards of professionalism, respect, and integrity as your face-to-face communications. When using personal social media sites, if you identify yourself as an employee of Sherman Independent School District, you must remember that you have associated yourself with the district, your colleagues and your school community; therefore, you must ensure that any associated content is consistent with the mission and vision of the district.
- **Use Common Sense:** Remember that what you do on social media is a direct reflection of what happens in the school. If an activity is not appropriate to do in front of children or at the school, then it should not be posted on social media, period. Post that may shed a negative light on yourself could result in disciplinary action or termination.
- **Post with Caution:** You have a right to post whatever you would like on your personal social media account. However, as an educator, we do encourage you to govern yourself accordingly and post information with caution. Things posted with the potential to shed a negative light on the district could result in disciplinary action or termination.
- **Sharing Work Related Post:** We encourage you to share your campus social media post to your social media accounts to highlight your work-related events. Do not post any work-related content relating to the school on your personal account with images identifying students.



- **Creating, Monitoring, Configuring & Administering District Related Social Media Sites:** You are required to get approval from the SISD Communications Department before creating a new district related social media account. If you have existing district related social media accounts that exist, please be sure to provide the communications department with the account information. Campus Social Media Managers, or their designated representatives, should only be given administrative rights or access to these sites. Make proper use of privacy settings to control access to the social media sites so that communication reaches the intended audience. Remember, if the default setting for comments is turned on, you must monitor the comments on that site on a daily basis. At least two site administrators are recommended for campus social media sites. When an administrator leaves the school, a new one should be named in advance so that you ensure a smooth transition. Each campus will provide login and password information to the Sherman ISD communications department and campus principal.
- **Posting Student Information:** Do not under any circumstances post personal identifiable student information of any kind without parental consent. All student consent information is on file in TEAMS. You may want to advise students and staff who participate in social media that posting information like names and photographs on the school's social media sites is not allowed without parental consent. All student consent information is on file in TEAMS.
- **Personal Responsibility of Posting on Social Media:** The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By identifying yourself as a Sherman ISD School District employee online, you are now connected to the district. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at Sherman ISD, professional, and appropriate.
- **Photo Guidelines:** Photos posted on social media sites can bring a post to life. They should, however, follow some strict guidelines. Remember first and foremost to follow the permissions listed above when considering whether or not to post pictures of students. Also, photos posted on social media pages should favorably portray the school and district as well as the person or persons depicted in the photos. Pictures of teachers at public events can be posted on the school's social networking sites, but they must be appropriate. Examples of photos that should



be avoided include but are not limited to: photos involving alcohol, nudity or immodest dress, medical and hospital patients, and graphic scenes.

- **Logo and titles:** The name of the school should begin the title of any social network page. The school or district name & logo cannot be used on any social media pages except on official pages sanctioned by the district or school.
- **Unofficial Campus pages:** If there is an unofficial campus page that exists, please notify the communications department and campus principal. All official Sherman ISD campus pages will state that they are official.

**Sherman Independent School District social media sites, articles or comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be permitted:**

1. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
2. Profane language or content;
3. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
4. Content that promotes bullying including but not limited to cyberbullying, intimidation, hazing or initiation activity, extortion, or any other verbal, written, or physical conduct that causes or threatens to cause violence, bodily harm or substantial disruption.
  - Cyberbullying includes the transmission of communications, posting of harassing messages, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social networking sites, or other digital technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device, camera, computer, or pager. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity to damage that person's reputation.
5. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
6. Solicitations of commerce not benefiting the Sherman Independent School District;
7. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
8. Information that may compromise the safety or security of Sherman Independent School District employees or students, the public or public systems;



9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, including but not limited to copyright.
10. Sherman ISD reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.

### **Campus Social Media Guidelines**

All Sherman ISD campuses and athletic programs currently have active Facebook and Twitter social media accounts. The guidelines for posting are below.

#### **Interacting**

As district social media managers, we recommend that you refrain from posting or commenting on social media pages, sites, or any other digital media on behalf of Sherman ISD or any of its campuses.

You may follow @ShermanISD on Facebook and Twitter and other educational entities.

#### **Responding**

- Use professional judgment at all times when responding to posts or messages on your social media account.
- Legitimate concerns or questions should be answered to promptly and directed to the proper district official.
- For matters that require immediate attention, or if you are unsure how to respond to a message or a post, please contact your campus principal or the Sherman ISD Communications Department immediately.

#### **Anonymous Tips/Parent concerns**

- Please report anonymous tips to your campus administrator immediately before responding. If an administrator is not available, then please contact the Communications Department.
  
- Parent concerns should be reported to the campus principal immediately before responding.



## Facebook

- Less is more. Keep information to 4 sentences per paragraph and two paragraphs maximum. People rarely read an entire post that is a page long.
- Embed trusted links to a website for more information in your post. Put the most important information (who, what, when, where, why) first.
- Include contact information. You want to start a conversation with interested people, not overwhelm them with details.
- Make sure to include relevant information to accompany any photos.
- Information to be posted must be non-commercial and non-profit. We will not promote for-profit posts through district media.

## Twitter

Sherman ISD regularly tweets information of events that are happening in the district and community. We often receive information that is far more detailed than what is necessary for an impactful tweet, so we are adopting the following guidelines:

- Information tweeted must be non-commercial and non-profit. We will not promote for-profit posts through district media.
- Less is more. Twitter limits content (including the @handle and #hashtag) to 280 characters. Embedded links in the tweet send readers to the location of the information. Remember the embedded web address also counts in the 280 character limit.
- Include your @handle.
- Attach a picture to promote events if you don't have a link. The graphic can include more information than you can consist of in 280 characters.

For additional information regarding the SISD social media guidelines, please feel free to contact Director of Communications, Kimberly Simpson at [KSimpson@ShermanISD.net](mailto:KSimpson@ShermanISD.net).