social media
Personal vs. Professional

With billions of people on social media, the need for keeping separate personal and personal professional accounts has never been more important. Separating your professional digital presence from your personal digital presence can be especially important for educators. To learn more or if you have questions, contact Darcy Totten at dtotten@acsa.org.

Twitter and Facebook:

PROFILE PIC: On your personal account, this can be anything you like. Keep in mind though, that your account can be found by anyone and even if it is set to private, your profile picture will still appear. Choose wisely.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS: If your title, school, district name, or school mascot is in the handle or name of your account, if staff members are the main audience for the account and if your school or district is primarily promoted using the account…then it is not a personal account in the way you might think of it.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS: Be yourself on these accounts. Just be aware that they might be found by community members, students, board members or future employers and that the content on these accounts can become an issue with your employer, depending on the circumstances.

SHARES: You can add a disclaimer that shares and retweets do not reflect your own viewpoints, but that isn't necessarily going to keep you out of hot water, especially if you add your own commentary. Think before you share.

PRIVACY SETTINGS: You should make sure that any account you use in your personal life has as little crossover as possible with the accounts you use in your professional life. Do not follow colleagues or allow them to follow you. Make sure that you set your privacy settings to completely private. Be careful of your comments on other people's pages and remember - nothing is ever secret or will ever fully disappear once it's online.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTS:
- Keep politics off the page.
- Keep romance off the page.
- Don't swear or post gifs/video of others swearing.
- Don't air out dirty laundry between departments with cute hashtags.
- Don't use inappropriate hashtags.
- Don't post pictures of drinking or of people in your life drinking.
- No swimsuit pictures or pictures of you doing illegal stuff. Obviously.
- Avoid posting TV spoilers or vacation photos here. This is still a work page.

HANDLE:
Keep it clean. Handles and page titles can be seen by anyone. Keep in mind that this too can become an issue in your work life.

HOWTO CHANGE AN EXISTING TWITTER HANDLE:

1. Log in to Twitter.com and visit your account settings pages from the gearwheel dropdown menu in the top right corner.
2. On your account settings page, change the username listed in your username field.
3. If the username is taken, you'll be prompted to choose another one.
4. Click Save changes at the bottom of the page.

NOTE: Changing your username will not affect your existing followers, direct messages, or @replies. Your followers will simply see a new username next to your profile photo when you update.

HASHTAGS AND TAGGING:

A Twitter hashtag ties the conversations of different users together to make them easy to search by clicking on the hashtag. Any other post with the same hashtag will also appear in one searchable file.

ProTip: The @ sign tags an individual and is visible to those who follow that individual. To tweet only to an individual, begin the tweet with their handle. To tweet to an individual and make it visible to the feed, place a period in front of the @ sign.

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE POSTS:

To make a Facebook post public, click on the button to the right of "Post" and choose "Public" from the dropdown menu. If you make a post private, others cannot share that post.

Have Questions? Contact Darcy Totten at dtotten@acsa.org for help. The above guidance does not constitute legal advice. Please consult your legal team with specific questions regarding employment, legal issues or challenges regarding social media and the workplace.