# SOCIAL MEDIA

WHY IT MATTERS

TOOLS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

It keeps your stakeholders informed: Social media helps you connect with and inform your campus and the community. While social media is not the only way that you can or should communicate with stakeholders, it is one of many channels you should be using to quickly disseminate information.

It's positive promotion: The goal of your social media is to provide a day-to-day look at your campus and the great things going on there. This can create more public support for our schools and the potential for more community and business partnerships. Traditional media outlets don't always report on all the successes and achievements at our schools, and social media helps us tell those stories and control the conversation.

It aids student recruitment: Social media, in addition to websites, can be the first introduction a parent has to a school they are considering. Your social media is a marketing tool that can influence that decision.

It aids teacher recruitment: Many prospective hires will look at a school's social media channels to get a sense of the place and culture there. A robust social media presence that features all of the great things happening at your school can make a difference.
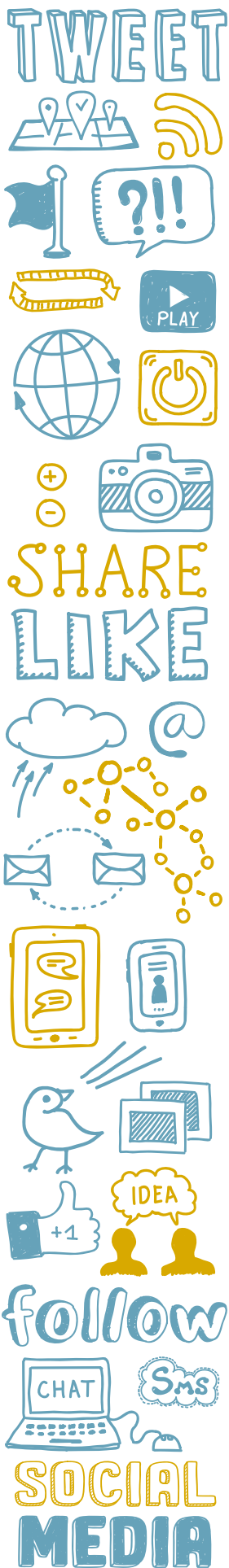
TWITTER: GETTING STARTED

Step-by-step guide to create your Twitter account

Go to **Twitter.com/signup.**

Enter your school's name. Enter an email address that you would like your account to be tied to, and a password that you don't mind sharing should others become involved in the school's social media in the future. Click **"Sign up."**

You will be prompted to enter a phone number.

You will be prompted to choose a username. If your school's name isn't available, try adding HISD into the name (e.g. HerreraHISD). Click **"Sign up."**

There are now six steps to complete. On **Step 1 of 6**, click **"Let's go!"**

Step 2 of 6 asks you to add a photo. An image that is **400 x 400** (Displays 200 x 200) is ideal. Make it something that is good quality and represents your school, like a logo.

Step 3 of 6 asks what topics interest you. This is to give you suggested accounts to follow. Choose whatever you like or none at all. Click **"Continue."**

Step 4 of 6 suggests Twitter import your email contacts. Since this is not a personal account, you can skip this step by clicking **"No thanks."**

Step 5 of 6 suggests Twitter accounts to follow. You can choose some, all or none of these. When you make your selection, click the blue button at the upper right of the page.

Step 6 of 6 is the completion of your profile. Click on your username in the top left corner, right next to your new profile picture. On the next screen, click **"edit profile"** to the top right. Here you can do several things:

- Fill out a bio that identifies you as an HISD school and touts what makes your school special.
- Add your school's location.
- Add your school's website address.
- Choose a theme color for your page. It can match your profile picture.
- Add a header photo or keep it a solid color: Make sure the photo you choose is of good quality and is horizontal enough that it doesn't cut off heads. A beauty shot of your school, a classroom full of smiling students, or a panoramic photo of teachers and staff would be good choices for this, and 1500x500 is a good size. Just check the photo crop once it's posted to ensure it's visually appealing.
- Click **"Save changes."**

Now, send your first Tweet! And don't forget to follow **@HoustonISD**. We'll follow you and add you to a list called "HISD Schools, Depts." so we'll see your tweets quickly – and we might **retweet you!** Take a look at the list so you can follow other district schools:

https://twitter.com/HoustonISD/lists/hisd-schools-depts/members

Download the Twitter app on your mobile phone. The app makes it easy to take and tweet photos and videos. **(If you have a personal Twitter account, too, always check to see that you are tweeting from the right account!)**

TWITTER TIPS

Tips for posting on Twitter

Twitter's character count is 280 – but keep your posts as brief as possible.

Post photos. Lots of photos. Post videos, too. And GIFS. Twitter limits users to 4 photos per post and limits videos (1 per post) to 2 minutes and 20 seconds.

Use shortened links. It only takes a minute to set up a free account on bitly.com, and you'll be able to see how many people clicked on those links. It's often helpful to add the link to your Tweet before you start typing the rest of the text so you're sure to have room for it.

Remember that everything you post is public. If you don't want every single person in the world to see it, don't post it. Even if you delete a post, there's a chance someone could have a screenshot of it. You can't edit a tweet, but you can delete it.

Post regularly. If possible, one tweet a day is a good place to start. **Retweets count!** Check to see if **@HoustonISD** has posted anything of interest to your followers. Share content that is school-related, educational, and relevant to your school community. Celebrate victories. Post academic and athletic wins. Celebrate and spotlight your students, faculty and staff.

Be authentic. People want to feel like they're communicating with a human being. Be funny. Be sensitive. Be serious when you need to. Always be conversational.

Engage with your followers. Answer any reasonable questions tweeted to your account or received as a direct message. If you do not know the answer to the question, find someone who does! If you find a tweet that contains a threat against anyone at your school, or the school in general, get screenshots of it and report it to the principal and HISD police immediately.

Do not engage in an argument with anyone. If things begin to get heated, take the conversation off social media.

Recognize and thank community and business partners. Tagging the business may result in more people seeing your tweet, and that could translate to more followers.

Tags and hashtags are different. Tagging is adding to your tweet a Twitter handle belonging to another person/company so they will see it. Do it wherever possible. If you put your tag as the first **"word"** in your tweet, add a period before the handle (ex: .@HoustonISD). Without that period, Twitter thinks the tweet is supposed to only be seen by the person with the handle.

A hashtag groups tweets together by keywords: #WeAreHISD. Clicking on the hashtagged word shows you all other tweets with that hashtag. Create your own hashtag (it's best to do a search for the hashtag to see if it is in use first) and use it frequently, or join the conversation using an existing hashtag.

Schedule posts. Sign up for TweetDeck or HootSuite to schedule your posts. You don't have to be on social media 24/7 to use it effectively.

Make sure your students' safety is a priority. Be sure all students in photos have signed media releases.

Ask for help if you need it. If you have general questions about social media, give the **HISD Communications Department** a call at **713-556-6066** and someone will assist you.
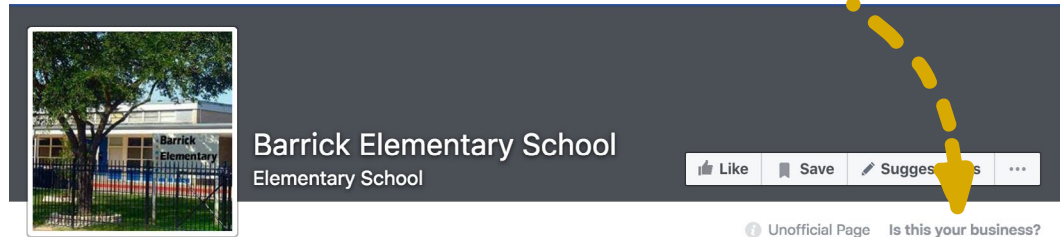
FACEBOOK: GETTING STARTED

Step-by-step guide to creating your Facebook account

If your school has an **"Unofficial Page"** on Facebook, you may be able to claim it. Here's how:

Click on **"Is this your business?"**

Barrick Elementary School
Elementary School

Like   Save   Sugges...s   ...

Unofficial Page   Is this your business?

Choose an option in the box that pops up.

If you need to create a page from scratch, or are unsuccessful claiming an **"Unofficial Page,"** follow these steps:

Log in to your personal Facebook account. Don't worry, people who like the page you're about to create, and even other page administrators, will **NOT** be able to access or see anything on your personal account at any time.

At the top of the page, you'll see your name. Look over to the little down icon arrow all the way to the right. Click on that icon and select **"Create Page."**

Click the box that says **"Company, Organization or Institution."** You'll need to choose a category, so pick your school level. If your school is a high or multilevel school, select **"School."** In the **"Company Name"** box, enter your school's full name (e.g. Yates High School). Click **"Get Started."**

Enter a short description of your school. This should convey what programs are offered, what makes it unique, and that the school is in HISD. Below that field, enter the address for your school's website. Next, choose how your name will appear in the URL. Some styles: YatesHighSchool, YatesHS, YatesHISD. Click **"Save Info."**

Upload a profile image. You may want to use your school's logo or an image of your school's mascot. The image should be **180 x 180** (Displays 170 x 170 on Desktop). Click **"Save Photo."**

Add your school's page to your favorites section. This will appear on the left navigation of the news feed on your personal account. Click **"Add to Favorites."**

The next page will let you customize your audience. For location, enter **"Houston, Texas"** with a 25-mile radius. For age, choose 13 and 65+. For gender, choose all. Leave **"interests"** blank.

You'll now be on your page. Facebook will take you through a short tutorial.

Add a cover photo. There will be a little camera icon above your profile picture. Click that and add a wide image there – the size is **820x312**. Your profile image will cover up the lower left of the header image, so be sure not to have someone's face there! Going forward, you can update your banner photo to coincide with what's happening on your campus.

FACEBOOK: GETTING STARTED

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Next, click on **"settings"** on the right side of the page's top navigation bar. Here's what you need to set:

Under **"General"**:

- For **"Visitor Posts,"** click **"Edit"** and uncheck **"Allow photo and video posts."** Save your changes.
- For **"Page Moderation,"** click **"Edit"** and choose **"Strong."** Save your changes.

Under **"Page Info"**:

- Enter your address, hours of operation, phone number, general email address for people to contact you (if you have one).

Under **"Notifications"**:

- It's up to you to choose what alerts you want to receive. If you get too many, you can always change these later.

Under **"Page Roles"**:

- This is where you can add other school employees so they'll be able to post content and moderate the page. Please keep in mind that anyone who has access to this page **MUST** be an **HISD employee. Do NOT** add **PTO** members or anyone else outside the district. In the event that a page administrator leaves the district, another page administrator needs to remove them **ASAP**.
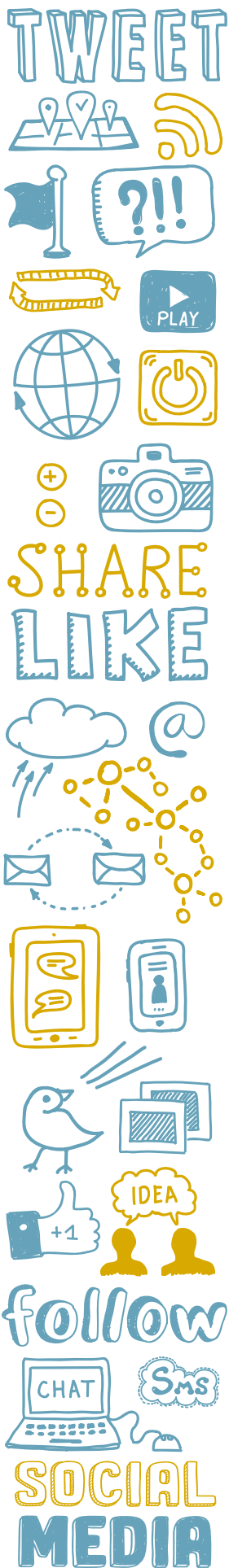
FACEBOOK TIPS

Tips for posting on Facebook

Keep it short and meaningful. You only have a few seconds to grab someone's attention with your post, so make it count!

Remember that everything you post is public. If you don't want every single person in the world to see it, don't post it. Even if you delete a post, there's a chance someone could have a screenshot of it. You can edit posts after they have been published by clicking the down arrow in the top right corner of the post and choosing **"Edit Post."**

Post regularly. Two to three posts per week is a good place to start. Share content that is school-related, educational, and relevant to your school community. Fun things, like free days at the zoo, are also great to post. Post congratulatory messages regarding student achievement. Celebrate and spotlight your students, faculty and staff.

Post photo galleries. You have options, such as a photo carousel and a video slideshow, but the standard photo album or photo status will do. Parents love to see photos from the classroom and field trips.

Post "native" video. It is best to upload video directly to Facebook, rather than make users click on a link to view it. Keep video short, 15-30 seconds (Although if the need arises, Facebook allows videos of up to 45 minutes.) Post video of students engaging in the classroom, performances, etc.

Answer questions and engage your community. Followers sometimes will use Facebook as a way to ask questions or get information, and they appreciate timely responses. But most importantly, they are more willing to engage with your page if you engage them back by responding to comments and messages. That in turn will help your posts pop up on their timeline more often, which allows their followers/ friends to see and potentially engage as well.

Recognize and thank community and business partners. For example, if Target made a big donation to your school, post that and tag Target in your post. If the school has a Facebook account, use that to post a thank-you message directly on Target's Facebook timeline.
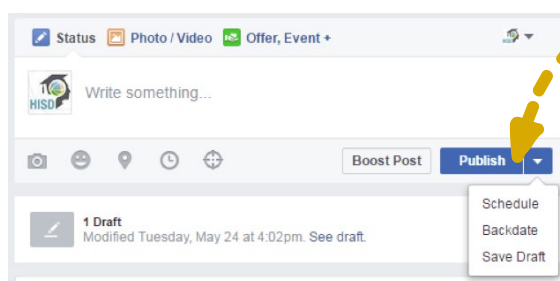
Schedule posts. You can schedule posts directly on Facebook by selecting the arrow next to **"Publish."**

Post when your audience is online. Many people check Facebook right when they wake up and while they're watching primetime TV.

Make sure your students' safety is a priority. Be sure all students in photos have signed media releases.

Ask for help if you need it. If you have general questions about social media, give the **HISD Communications Department** a call at **713-556-6066** and someone will assist you.
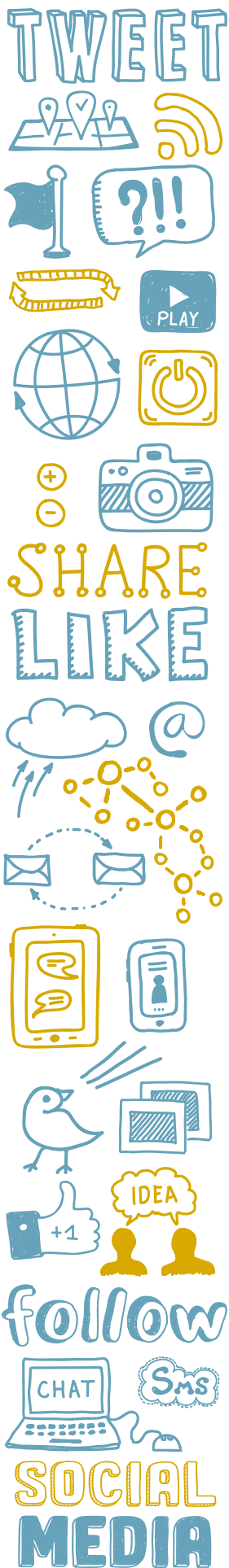
INSTAGRAM: GETTING STARTED

Step-by-step guide to create your Instagram account

Go to **Instagram.com** or download the **Instagram app** and click **"Sign Up."**

Enter an email address that you would like your account to be tied to under **Mobile Number** or **Email**.

Enter the name of your school under **Full Name**.

Choose and enter a Username. If your school's name isn't available, try adding HISD into the name (e.g. HerreraHISD).

Choose and enter a **Password** that you don't mind sharing should others become involved in the school's social media in the future. Click **"Sign Up."**

Add a profile photo. You may want to use your school's logo or an image of your school's mascot.

Complete a biography. This should convey what programs are offered at your school, what makes it unique, and that the school is in HISD. Below that, add a link to your school's website.

### You're almost ready to post!

On a mobile device, you want to make sure you're allowing Instagram to access your **photos**, **camera**, and **microphone**.

Instagram provides several options for posting via the **"+"** icon:

- An image or series of images in the feed under "post"
- Reels
- Stories

Take a look at examples of each on our main account **@houstontxisd**, and don't forget to follow so we can follow you back!

If you have a personal Instagram account, always check to see that you are posting from the right account.
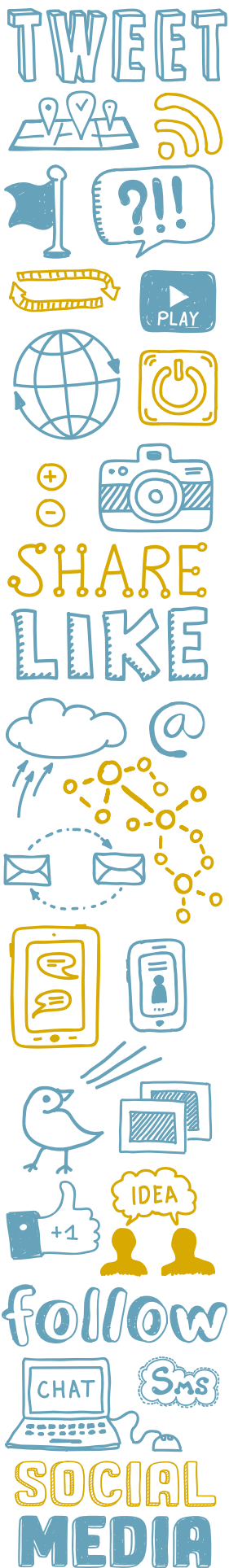
INSTAGRAM TIPS

Tips for posting on Instagram

Remember that everything you post is public. If you don't want every single person in the world to see it, don't post it. Even if you delete a post, there's a chance someone could have a screenshot of it. You can edit posts after they have been published by clicking the three dots in the top right corner of the post and choosing **"Edit."**

Post regularly. Two to three posts per week is a good place to start. Share content that is school-related, educational, and relevant to your school community. Fun things, like field day, are also great to post. Celebrate and spotlight your students, faculty, and staff.

Post photo galleries. You have options, such as a photo carousel and a video slideshow, but the standard photo album or photo status will do.

Turn a photo gallery and/or video into a Reel. You have the option to combine your images and/or video clips into one video. You can even add music, filters, and graphics that are already built into the app. Have fun with it!

Avoid putting URLs in your posts. Instagram will not recognize them as links. Instead, direct followers to your link in bio or **HoustonISD.org.**

You can add links to stories. On your stories post, just swipe up, choose the **LINK** sticker, and add the URL.

Use tags and hashtags. Tag another account's Instagram handle to your post so they will see it. Use relevant hashtags such as #HISD to group your post with others using the same keywords.

Answer questions and engage your community. Followers sometimes will use Instagram as a way to ask questions or get information, and they appreciate timely responses. But most importantly, they are more willing to engage with your page if you engage them back by responding to comments and messages. That in turn will help your posts pop up on their feed more often.

Post when your audience is online. Many people check Instagram right when they wake up and while they're watching primetime TV.

Make sure your students' safety is a priority. Be sure all students in photos have signed media releases.

Ask for help if you need it. If you have general questions about social media, give the **HISD Communications Department** a call at **713-556-6066** and someone will assist you.

TWITTER ANALYTICS

View your Twitter activity and engagement

Go to your Twitter profile page. To the right of your Twitter feed, you will see a box that says **"Your Tweet activity."** There you can see how many impressions your tweets had in the past month.

Click on **"View your top tweets."** This takes you to an analytics page that shows you top tweets, impressions, engagement, retweets, likes and how many followers clicked on a link you sent out.

- **Impressions:** Number of times your tweet was displayed
- **Engagements:** Number of interactions people had with your content, such as likes and retweets

Use analytics to get a better idea about what kind of information your community wants to see, what's working, and what is not.

FACEBOOK INSIGHTS

View your Facebook activity and engagement

To access information about your page's analytics, click on **"Insights"** at the top of your page. This function will help you better understand the demographics of who your posts are reaching, what time of day is best to post, what type of content is working best on your page, and which posts are getting the most engagement. Three important measurements include:

- **Reach:** The number of times an item appeared in Facebook feeds
- **Post engagements:** When someone interacts with your content (likes, clicks to read, shares)
- **Page likes:** When someone decides they want your content to appear in their own feed

INSTAGRAM INSIGHTS

View your Instagram activity and engagement

Go to your Instagram profile on the mobile app. Tap the **"Insights"** action button. You can also tap the three lines in the upper right corner, then tap "Insights".

View the metrics under the Overview section or specific content you've shared for a more detailed breakdown.

- **Accounts reached:** Total number of unique users who have seen your content
- **Accounts engaged**: Total number of accounts that interacted with your content in a given time period
- **Total followers:** Number of accounts following your account