

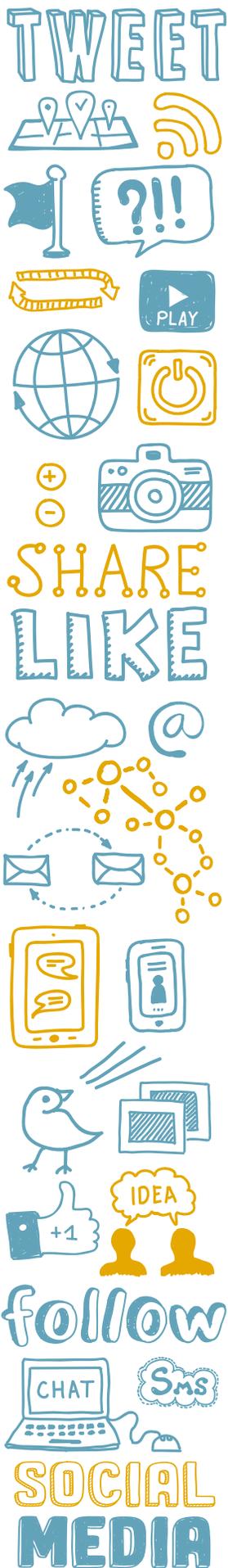


TOOLS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

It's the public face of your school. Your website is the first thing that comes up in a search engine and often the first introduction of your school to the public.

It aids recruitment. Your website is where parents of prospective students often look first for information about the school. The community can use it to learn more about your programs and successes.

It's a vital resource of information. While the website is not your only channel of communication, it is an important one. Parents and students can use it to keep track of important dates and announcements and link to school and district resources.



YOUR WEBSITE: #GOINGMOBILE

Move to a mobile-friendly platform

Become a school that is **#GoingMobile**. More parents are relying on their mobile phones and/or tablets to access the web, including information about their children's schools. HISD offers new mobile-friendly school websites to ensure a quality experience, regardless of screen size.

Sign up for **Schoolwires**. The content management system will allow your school to create a robust public site that not only represents your school professionally but also provides tools to maximize your web presence. Schoolwires allows you to easily manage staff directories, create blogs, and maintain school calendars.

How do you get an account? Send an email to Web@HoustonISD.org with "Requesting a Schoolwires Account" as your subject and Cc the principal of the school to verify your request.

WEBSITE TIPS

Tips for maintaining your website

Introduce yourself. Provide a high-quality photo and a short bio of your school's principal, and make it easy to find on the homepage. This puts a face to your school.

Tout your school's programs. Make the information easy to find and comprehensive. The website is often the first place a parent will look when they are choosing between schools, so make sure you are communicating what makes your school stand out.

Keep it fresh. Remove or hide out-of-date information and be sure to update:

- Content on your school's front page
- Contact information
- Your school calendar (add your own events to the district calendar)
- Staff directories
- Links to news and announcements

Share your successes and special moments. Look for opportunities to create school news that you can share on your site. News doesn't have to be a story – it can be a list, video, photo gallery or link to stories in the media that pertain to your school.

Write for the web. Users rarely read web pages the way they do books and other printed materials. They scan to search for individual phrases and keywords. So keep your content short and use bulleted lists to highlight important information and make it stand out from the rest of your text.

Don't bury the lead. Is your story about teachers taking part in a specialized training in New York? Then that information should be at the top of your post. Remember – readers want the meat of the story up front.

Use hyperlinks. Providing hyperlinks is an effective way to lead users to other content on your site.

Clean it up. Keep your site clutter-free and easy to navigate. Is information organized logically and easy to find? Are there broken links? Are you using prime real estate at the top of the page effectively?

Any questions? Contact us at Web@HoustonISD.org.