

# reality VERSUS perception

*Facebook dominates the lives  
of the millennial generation*

BY BRADLEY WILSON, CJE

Doug Johnson is right when he observes, “**Personal communication and computing devices are here to stay. The horse is out of the barn, and trying now to close the barn door is futile. Instead of trying to get the horse back in, smart educators will figure out how to saddle and ride it.**”

If anything is a thing of the past, it is the traditional classroom in which students sit for 55 minutes listening to a teacher drone on. **Educators need to make use of Facebook as a place where today’s students live** to help educate students, to promote their communication skills and to increase their civic engagement. Facebook is uniquely qualified to do so. That is reality.



**Doug Johnson** has been the director of media and technology for the Mankato (Minn.) Public Schools since 1991 and has served as an adjunct faculty member of Minnesota State University since 1990. <http://www.doug-johnson.com/bio>



### BCN-TV

Out of Bryant, Central and Northridge High Schools in Tuscaloosa, Ala., the television station advised by Mark Raines extensively uses Facebook, Twitter and Vimeo.



### CARILLON YEARBOOK

The yearbook at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, Calif., advised by Dmitri Conom, posts photos of events and the staff at work on its Facebook account.



### NORTHRIDGE REPORTER

From Northridge High School in Tuscaloosa, Ala., Susan Newell, adviser, the *Reporter* uses Facebook and a blog for an online presence.

Any examination of Facebook as an educational problem or opportunity has to begin with a reality check for educators.

First, social networking is the dominant out-of-school, leisure-time computer-using activity for students in the United States.

Second, today's students are digital natives. They know only a world in which being connected is a way of life and expect to be connected with one another 24/7.

Third, as **Del Siegle**, professor of educational psychology at the University of Connecticut, said, "Educators cannot ignore the important role that social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace play in young people's social and self-development. Having a social networking account is a rite of passage, and educators and parents need to understand the important developmental role these sites play."

Finally, **Derek Hansen**, assistant professor at Brigham Young University, said, "Although challenging to navigate, this sea of information can take us to previously unseen places filled with new insights and opportunities."

Facebook is a tangible part of the educational landscape and journalism educators would be foolish to ignore the potential benefits it offers in a classroom environment.

### THE REJECTION

As with many innovations in education, the first reaction for many administrators and legislators nationwide to Facebook — which, if it were a country, would be surpassed by only China and India in population — is to block it.

In July, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon signed a law banning teachers from using social networking sites to communicate with students, including former students who are age 18 and under and have not graduated yet.

"No teacher shall establish, maintain or use a non-work-related Internet site which allows exclu-

continued on page 4

## TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

To guide teachers through these issues, Canadian language educator **Bernadette Rego** developed tips for educators using Facebook:

- Create a separate account for classroom use with the appropriate filters.
- Block your personal account, except for public information, from everyone except your Facebook friends.
- Install only applications that uphold a professional image — use the same standard for joining groups.
- Join a professional learning community, also called a professional learning network, on Facebook.
- Establish professional boundaries with students. For example, while students might live 24/7 on Facebook, educators should let students know when they would be available to chat or to respond to electronic communication. Further, as an educator would discuss any inappropriate conduct they witnessed a student doing in person, educators should discuss inappropriate online conduct with the student as part of the learning process. Educators should teach students how to behave appropriately online.

"As a teacher, you want to present yourself as someone who is respectful and acts as a responsible adult role model. You are also presenting this image to your students' parents, your colleagues, pre-service teachers, administrators and the general public," Rego said.

**Kyle Phillips**, adviser at Washington High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, said friending a student has other implications.

If I were friends with students, Phillips said, it would be one more arena where I would need to be on the lookout as a mandatory reporter for things they turn in that could really be harmful for students I recognize in a photo even though they were not tagged. I would still have to turn them in for doing something illegal.



**Del Siegle** is a professor Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut where he does research in education of gifted and talented students.



**Bernadette Rego** is a language educator who said her online teaching experiences helped her realize the potential in the Flipped Classroom Approach. Visit [thedailyriff.com/articles/the-flipped-class-manifest-823.php](http://thedailyriff.com/articles/the-flipped-class-manifest-823.php)

continued from page 3

sive access with a current or former student," Senate Bill 54, commonly called Missouri's "Facebook Law," stated.

On Aug. 16, Cole County Circuit Judge Jon Beetem blocked the law shortly before it was to take effect. He declared that it "would have a chilling effect" on free-speech rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution. In October, the Missouri Legislature repealed the law.

In Rhode Island, House Bill 5941 includes a blanket prohibition on the use of social networking sites on school grounds during school hours as part of that state's anti-bullying efforts.

A 2009 Louisiana law, Act 214, prohibits school employees from using school phones, email accounts or other school equipment to communicate with students unless the communication is "related to ... educational services."

A Sept. 2 editorial in the Pottsville (Pa.) *Republican* coined Facebook as being a tool on the digital path to hell and said it was a "good idea" to preclude teachers from communicating with students on social networking sites.

Nevertheless, students find a way. As **Kyle Phillips**, adviser at Washington High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, said, "It's not necessary to block them because all the students are using their smartphones to access the sites anyway so it's only creating a further gap in technology accessibility between the students on different ends of the socioeconomic scale."

### A SIGNIFICANT ROLE

MediaShift social media editor **Nathan Gibbs** began his Public Broadcasting Service article on integrating social media into the classroom by contradicting the attitudes in Missouri, Rhode Island and Louisiana.

"Yes, Facebook can play a significant, positive role in the classroom."

A 2010 study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that students spend more time with media, including social media, than any other activity — an average of more than 7.5 hours a day, seven days a week. "Today's 8- to 18-year-olds" spend an average of an hour and a half daily using the computer outside of school work, an increase of almost half an hour over five years ago." Use

**6 Lifestyle** the patriot  
Volume 48 Issue 1 February 2011

# friend me on facebook

Exploring social media and online privacy with creation of Heather Williams

Facebook pictures surfaced showing several key athletes drinking alcohol.

The administration did not actively search Facebook for the photos, but instead, an anonymous person sent three separate envelopes containing the photos pulled from Facebook to Dean of Students Thomas Vierheiler, President Richard O'Hara, and former Freshman Dean Elizabeth Pyrak, resulting in the athletes' ten-day suspension from all extracurricular activities.

While no members of the administration or faculty were involved in "The Patriot" investigation, paranoia struck the JC community as students questioned the true privacy of their accounts. Within two days, students and parents contacted the administration, questioning the legitimacy of the profile and the administration's involvement.

As "The Patriot" deleted the Heather Williams profile and the experimental portion of the investigation came to a close, members of "The Patriot" staff approached the administration to clarify the most prominent concerns that students' voiced during the investigation: is the administration currently searching for inappropriate content on students' online profiles?

According to Dean of Students Thomas Vierheiler, the answer is "no."

Facebook pictures surfaced showing several key athletes drinking alcohol.

The administration did not actively search Facebook for the photos, but instead, an anonymous person sent three separate envelopes containing the photos pulled from Facebook to Dean of Students Thomas Vierheiler, President Richard O'Hara, and former Freshman Dean Elizabeth Pyrak, resulting in the athletes' ten-day suspension from all extracurricular activities.

While no members of the administration or faculty were involved in "The Patriot" investigation, paranoia struck the JC community as students questioned the true privacy of their accounts. Within two days, students and parents contacted the administration, questioning the legitimacy of the profile and the administration's involvement.

As "The Patriot" deleted the Heather Williams profile and the experimental portion of the investigation came to a close, members of "The Patriot" staff approached the administration to clarify the most prominent concerns that students' voiced during the investigation: is the administration currently searching for inappropriate content on students' online profiles?

According to Dean of Students Thomas Vierheiler, the answer is "no."

**By the Numbers**  
In the first hour of the experiment, Heather Williams friended a new JC student every **75 seconds**.  
After two hours, nearly **10%** of JC friended Heather.  
**119** students either accepted or requested Heather after **24 hours**.  
That's nearly **1 in 6** students at JC.

**Heather's Life Span**

**1:23 p.m. Feb. 1**  
Heather Williams's profile created, along with profiles for "friends" Rina Kasica and Erik Kellogg.

**9:42 p.m. Feb. 1**  
Rumors regarding admin involvement begin to circulate.

**9:16 p.m. Feb. 2**  
Heather Williams friended 119 students.

**3:34 p.m. Feb. 3**  
Profile deleted by staff.

**Feb. 4**  
"The Patriot" begins collecting student and admin reactions.

**9:16 p.m. Feb. 1**  
Heather Williams begins friending JC students.

**10:16 p.m. Feb. 1**  
Heather Williams friended 48 students.

**11:16 p.m. Feb. 1**  
Heather Williams friended 68 students after 2 hours.

**Feb. 3**  
Students and parents contact administration regarding profile.

**Feb. 4**  
Heather Williams revealed as part of social networking investigation.

**behavior notification**  
Uncovering the truth behind anonymous behavior online

**Taylor Schaefer**  
"Lifestyle" Editor

In 2007, country music singer Brad Paisley brought attention to online personas.

In his song "Online," he humorously describes a middle-aged, overweight burnout who works at the local pizza joint and still lives in his parents' basement. Though this man doesn't have much of a social life, his whole world is draped when he logs in to his MySpace account.

The lyrics play with the character's double life, claiming that "Online, I live in Malibu, I pose for Calvin Klein, I've been in GQ, I'm single and I've got, and I've got a pair of six pack abs that will blow your mind." Clearly, this isn't the case.

My point, you might ask? While most people don't go as far as this particular situation in creating totally false personas, most people act differently online than they do in real life face-to-face situations. While Paisley touches on the subject in a funny way, it is much more serious in reality. It's called the online distribution effect.

On Feb. 1, the Patriot created Heather Williams on Facebook and friended requested most of the JC student population. Not only did the rumors of Heather being the JC administration spread like wildfire, but the online distribution effect hit hard as well.

Within an hour of making the profile and the start of administration accusations, Heather received messages from students with offensive language and questionable comments. One anonymous student messaged Heather saying that whoever she was was "[epithetic] pathetic."

Other comments like, "nice try John Carroll," "stuck it John Carroll," one student asking for apologies from the administration, and many more were received. Online distribution was in full effect.

And Facebook is not the only place where this phenomenon is taking place. Blogger, Formspring, and just about any other site where people are allowed space to put their two cents in have illustrated the effect.

We are also lucky that in the JC community, the online distribution effect hasn't been pushed to its furthest limits. Many teen sui-

cides have been caused by or have been involved with online bullying like 15-year-old Phoebe Prince in Massachusetts, 13-year-old Megan Meier in Missouri, or 18-year-old Tyler Clement in New Jersey to name a few.

That's why do people engage themselves in this kind of behavior?

Psychology teacher Paul Lazor blames it simply on anonymity and bad judgment. "It's similar in cars. All of these things we use to communicate like facial expression, body posture and tone of voice are not present," he said. He explained that in a real life situation, "your frontal lobe [of the brain] would say don't do it, but it gets disregarded with social media."

Guidance counselor Carol Hoffin-Shape agrees with Lazor. "They have no consequences. They don't have to look into the other person's eyes and see the hurt they just inflicted on them."

Though Hoffin-Shape says she has never had a student come to her as a victim of online distribution, she's "very sure it happens. It gives [the perpetrator] this false bravado and empowers them," she said.



### CUBAN COUNCIL

The Cuban Council design firm of San Francisco and New York created the Facebook logo. Designers with this firm have also created work for Google, Twitter and Old Spice. According to Cuban Council, "Joe Kral of Test Pilot Collective," as explained in a Cuban Council release, "helped us out in creating this rock solid identity, which Peter Markatos later helped refine and extend to business cards and letterhead."

of social media account for an average of 22 minutes per day for every student.

Of every 12 people on the planet, more than one has a Facebook account. Students today live in Facebook. They play FarmVille and CastleVille. Facebook is in the palm of their hands on their cellphones day and night. When posting photos of themselves and their friends at the Homecoming dance, the football game and their pool parties, they tag everyone in their group. The new technology, as the Kaiser study also points out, can make traditional education more engaging and interactive.

"The main reason to use a Facebook group," Gibbs said, "is that students are already there. They don't have to remember another login or remember to go visit 'the class forum.' It fits seamlessly into their lives. It takes very little effort to click 'like' or add a comment to a classmate's idea. This fact alone encourages more interaction than other platforms."

**Lizabeth Walsh**, MJE, adviser at Reno (Nev.) High School said her yearbook students use Facebook to communicate quickly.

**PATRIOT**  
**John Carroll School,**  
Bel Air, Md.,  
jcpatriot.com, Mark  
Ionescu, adviser



“They are all on FB more than any other way I could reach them,” she said.

University of Maryland assistant professor **Christine Greenhow**, who is working on a book about education and social media, found that students use their online social network to obtain validation and appreciation of creative work. She pointed out that the validation can improve students’ self esteem and help them learn from more than one teacher. Students gain peer and alumni support. They reach out to former classmates to give or to receive tips in managing the ups and downs of high school or college life. The connections can help students adjust to the school environment and have a better experience while in school. Finally, students get help with school-related tasks. The social media environment helps them learn.

As **Nan Lin**, Duke University sociology professor, said in 1999, investment in social networks may benefit individuals through greater access to and use of influence, information, social credentials and reinforcement of identity and recognition — tasks of every teacher with every student every day.

While the first and most common reaction to distracting new media may be to ban it, savvy teachers will figure out how to improve the classroom environment. They do not tell students to put the cellphone away. Instead, they tell them to take the cellphone out, put it on their desk and let everyone know what they learned in class today. Educators are remiss if they do not take advantage of the new technology. Facebook, as **Tanja Bosch**, senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, said, “seems to be a natural venue for collaborative, student-led learning.”

## THE PROBLEMS

Part of the reluctance to use social media in the classroom is the lack of demonstrated benefits. As **Erica Rosenfeld Halverson**, assistant professor of educational psychology at the University of Wisconsin, said, “It is not clear that bringing these technologies into the classroom or the formal learning process has yet to improve learner outcomes.”

However, it is clear, as Greenhow said, that social networking allows people to visualize, to interact with and to activate existing personal and professional networks and to create connections with new ones unbounded by geographic distance. Expanding the classroom beyond the traditional four walls and 5-mile radius has to have positive educational benefits.

Educators, often opting to maintain a professional, distant relationship, are reluctant to

## RISKS INVOLVED IN SOCIAL NETWORKING

Beyond whether it is appropriate to be a Facebook friend with a student, there are legitimate risks with social networking, similar to risks that could occur when going to the local ice cream parlor after the basketball game.

**Anne Collier** and **Larry Magid**, who co-direct ConnectSafely.org, identified six risks:

- Posting information about themselves that (a) could help strangers determine their physical location; (b) could be used to manipulate them; or (c) whether posted by them or others, could cause psychological harm or jeopardize reputations and future prospects.
- Being a victim or perpetrator of cyberbullying.
- Spending too much time online, thereby losing a sense of balance in personal activities.
- Being exposed to inappropriate content although typically worse content can be found out on the Web at large than in Facebook. Having opportunities for inappropriate contact with adults.
- Damaging their reputation because of unkind or angry posts as well as because of compromising photos or videos.

RESOURCE: “A Parents’ Guide to Facebook” by Anne Collier and Larry Magid, co-directors, ConnectSafely.org, <http://www.connectsafely.org/>

be “friends” with their students. Walsh said she does not see a problem with teachers and students being friends on Facebook, “but that’s because I haven’t been burned by it.”

**Laurie Oksanen**, adviser at Westward Christian School in Miami, said she has a school Facebook account. Though social media are blocked at her school, she is friends with many of her junior and senior students on Facebook.

“I don’t seek them out. If they find me and request me, I usually accept,” said Oksanen, an adviser at a small (600 students) Christian school.

“I do get to know my students quite well — some of them have me for more than one year — and they know I care about them. They know that if I see them doing anything illegal, inappropriate or stupid, I’ll call them on it.

“It’s a good way for us to keep in touch with each other, a fast way for them to ask me questions. Most of my students also have my phone number. Instead of calling me, as some parents have during the past 20 years,

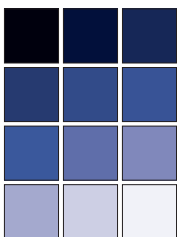
**continued on page 6**



**Christine Greenhow** is an assistant professor in the colleges of education and information at the University of Maryland at College Park. She was guest editor of the fall 2011 *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, issue on Youth, Learning and Social Media. [cgreenhow.org](http://cgreenhow.org)

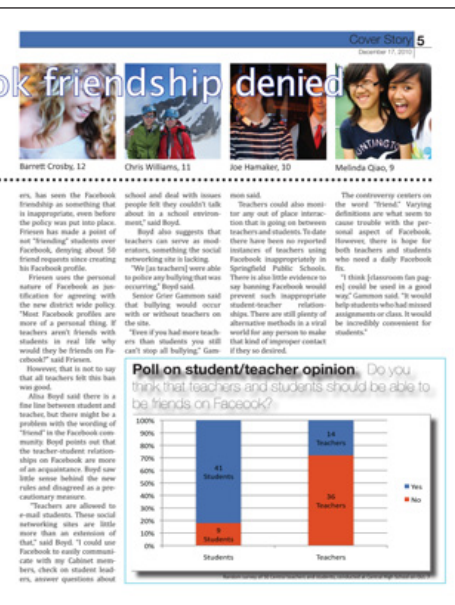
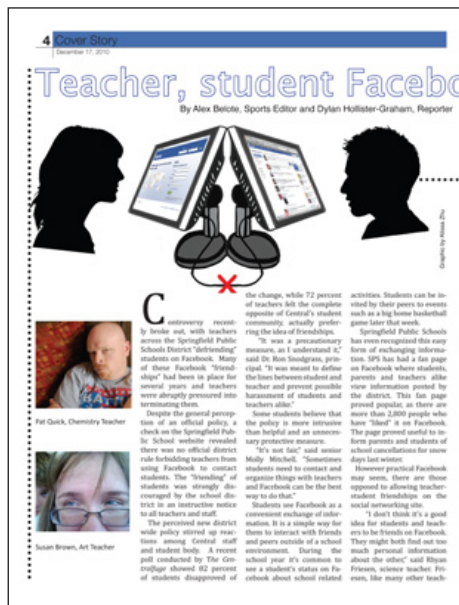


**Erica Rosenfeld Halverson**, in her research, found that the goals for learning are more important than the use of any individual technology in the classroom. Administrators should begin to think like designers rather than policy makers when determining whether and how to meaningfully bring social networking technologies into learning environments.



“I made it [Facebook] blue because I’m colorblind.”  
— **Mark Zuckerberg**

**FACEBOOK BLUE**  
Hexadecimal | 3b579b  
RGB | 59, 87, 155  
CMYK | 87, 73, 8, 1  
HSB | 222°, 62%, 61%



The Central High Times, Central High School, Springfield, Mo.

continued from page 5

they now text me. I would rather they ask me than someone else. Also, I believe that part of my job is being available to answer questions about classwork,” Oksanen said.

**Dmitri Conom**, adviser at Bellarmine College Preparatory School in San Jose, Calif., said his school’s policy is that teachers should not be the ones initiating the friend requests with the students.

“If students add the teacher, we are allowed to become friends with them. There are lots of hesitations. I feel it very necessary to be friends with my students as Facebook is sometimes the only way I can communicate with my editors. I actually taught a seminar to my colleagues about how to utilize the privacy settings so that students cannot peer into the lives of their teachers. It can be very easy if you take the time to set everything up correctly.”

**Michele Dunaway**, MJE, adviser at Francis Howell High School in St. Charles, Mo., said that long before the Missouri law (repealed) she had made it her practice to add students on Facebook only after they graduated.

“Teachers really need to realize that whatever they post is always public (no matter the setting),” Dunaway said. “If you wouldn’t say it in class, you shouldn’t be posting it on Facebook or Twitter. As for private messaging, it’s really more like a postcard. Don’t be stupid and write something you shouldn’t.”

Indeed, the Acceptable Use Policy of St. Mary’s Hall in San Antonio — a policy all faculty and staff are required to sign — stresses this point and reminds students, faculty and staff that the school monitors all Internet usage on a regular basis. The policy says that employ-

ees “should not engage students on Facebook.”

“As members of an educational community, we have the responsibility to teach our students — and model for them — how to develop appropriate ‘digital footprints,’” the policy states. “The most important rule to remember when engaging in social media is that there is no clear line between your professional life and your personal life. Fairly or unfairly, outside parties may link your personal postings on social media sites as a representation of Saint Mary’s Hall. Always post as if everyone will see it. Never post anything with the assumption that it is for a private or limited audience. With modern technology, there is no such thing as a private or limited audience.”

**Mary Kay Downes**, MJE and yearbook adviser at Chantilly (Va.) High School, said her personal policy is similar: not friending students until they graduate.

“I never would want to be placed in a situation where I observed things I have no business knowing about, especially having to do with the drinking and partying,” Downes said. “Students should have personal lives separate from yearbook lives. This way I do not have to win at the cuss words or be suspicious about the red cups.”

**Julie L. Rowse**, Bellevue (Neb.) West High School, said she sees little need to friend a student on Facebook because Facebook pages permit all students and teachers to interact on Facebook without being Facebook friends.

“That said, I think the Salem-esque reactions some districts and states (Missouri) have to student-teacher interaction is ludicrous,” Rowse said. “Mary-Kay LeTourneau, a Washington teacher imprisoned for a sexual

**COLORS THAT GO WITH FACEBOOK BLUE**



**Pentagram model**



**Triad model**



**Analogous model**



**Tetrad 2 model**



**Central Focus, Francis Howell Central High School, St. Charles, Mo., Matthew Schott, adviser**



*I use Edmodo on a weekly basis in my advanced Spanish classes. I can post a discussion question that students then answer online at some point during the week. Students who don't ordinarily feel confident enough to participate aloud in class can do so in a less stressful way.*

**JENNIFER MILLER**, SPANISH TEACHER AND WORLD LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT CHAIR AT FRANCIS HOWELL CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ST. CHARLES, MO.

affair with a teenage student, did not need Facebook to behave inappropriately with a student. Blaming social media for endangering children is completely faulty logic and fails to address problem behaviors by going after the medium.”

As chair of her school district's social media subcommittee, Rowse said she is working to write a policy for the district regarding student and teacher use of social media.

**Dan Nelson**, adviser at Ventura (Calif.) High School, said maybe Facebook has become such an accepted part of life that it is no longer inappropriate for teachers and students to communicate by using it.

“I used to think, in the early days of Facebook, when 14-year-old girls were bragging about what they had done over the week-

end, that FB was inappropriate for teacher/student communication,” Nelson said. “Today, my 75-year-old mom asked if I could explain Facebook because her great-grandbaby moved with her grandson to Nashville, and all the pictures are on ‘the Facebook.’ Maybe Facebook has become ubiquitous, and not the ‘slut engine’ and ‘binge drinking bulletin board’ that it started as.”

It is clear, as Siegle said, that parents and educators need to hold frank, open discussions with the young people in their charge

about responsible online social networking etiquette. Parents and educators have the same responsibility whether the social networking is online or in person, and parents and educators have been having those discussions with students for generations. Use of Facebook simply provides another series of teachable moments.

Parents and educators also need to discuss with students how much time they spend using social media. The Kaiser study found that heavy users of media (including television and video games) tended to do less well in school than light users of media. Incessant users of media were twice as likely to get in trouble more frequently than intermittent users.

#### THE BENEFITS

Schools blocking Facebook force students to find other ways to access their favorite social networking site. Other schools have found ways to allow students to interview students, to learn from other instructors and students and to collaborate and to interact with students outside their normal classroom.

“Social networking sites certainly have earned their spot in the world of technology,” Dziala said. “They provide instantaneous and efficient means of communicating.”

Striving to provide a tech-access environment that enhances the educational environment, schools have discovered innovative ways to make use of this young technology.

Some institutions use fan pages to generate a virtual community. According to Facebook, “Facebook pages enable public figures, businesses, organizations and other entities to

**continued on page 8**



**Edmodo** provides a safe and easy way for your class to connect and collaborate, share content, and access homework, grades and school notices. Its goal is to help educators harness the power of social media to customize the classroom for each and every learner.

**ABCDEFGHIJKL  
MNOPQRST  
abcdefghijkl  
nopqrst  
123456 7890  
! @ # \$ & \* ( )**

#### FREE FONT

Bogdan Balatchi designed a free version of a font based on the seven letters of the Facebook logo. [youthleaderstash.com/2011/08/01/facebook-font/](http://youthleaderstash.com/2011/08/01/facebook-font/)

The original Facebook logo is based on the font **Klavika**, a font created in 2004 by Eric Olson. Visit [buildinternet.com/2009/07/fonts-used-in-logos-of-popular-websites/](http://buildinternet.com/2009/07/fonts-used-in-logos-of-popular-websites/) to learn what fonts other popular websites use in their logos.



Surveyor,  
George  
Washington  
High School,  
Denver, Colo.,  
Amanda  
Schmidt,  
adviser



## RESOURCES

- Tanja Bosch. "Using online social networking for teaching and learning: Facebook use at the University of Cape Town" in *Communication*. 35(2), 2009.
- Ann Collier and Larry Magid. "A Parents' Guide to Facebook." Retrieved from <http://www.connectsafely.org/Safety-Advice-Articles/facebook-for-parents.html>
- Nathan Gibbs. "How to Integrate Social Tools into the Journalism Classroom" in *MediaShift*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2011/02/how-to-integrate-social-tools-into-the-journalism-classroom055.html>.
- Christine Greenhow. "Online Social Networks and Learning" in *On the Horizon*. 19(1), 2011.
- Derek Hansen. "Exploring Social Media Relationships" in *On the Horizon*. 19(1), 2011.
- Erica Rosenfeld Halverson. "Do Social Networking Technologies Have a Place in Formal Learning Environments?" in *On the Horizon*. 19(1), 2011.
- Doug Johnson. "Taming the Chaos" in *Learning and Leading with Technology*. 38(3), 2010
- Nan Lin. "Building a Network Theory of Social Capital," in *Connections*. 22(1), 1999.
- Victoria Rideout, Ulla Goehr and Donald Roberts. *Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-year-olds*. Menlo Park, Calif.: Henry Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010.
- Del Siegle. "Facing Facebook: A Guide for Nonteens" in *Gifted Child Today*. 34(2), 2011.

continued from page 7

create an authentic and public presence on Facebook. You, and every person on Facebook, can connect with these pages by becoming a fan and then receive their updates in your News Feed and interact with them."

The school yearbook could create a page to promote accolades the staff has received, completion of deadlines, sample pages or the index as it progresses with each deadline so students know that they are in the book. Also, the newspaper staff could create a page and post a photo of the day or breaking news.

**Jill Chittum**, MJE, adviser at Blue Valley High School, Stilwell, Kan., said both her yearbook and her newspaper students use Facebook regularly.

"This last week, I had a contest between NP and YB to see who could get the most 'likes' in one week," she said. "They got to work promoting and raised their numbers almost to double and triple what they were when they started."

While pages were designed to be the official profiles for entities, such as celebrities, brands or businesses, Facebook groups are the place for small group communication and for people to share their common interests and express their opinion. Groups allow people to come together around a common cause, issue or activity to organize, to express objectives, to discuss issues, to post photos and to share related content.

A journalism instructor could create a group for students in journalism classes to foster collaboration and constructive criticism of their classmates' work. Virtual literature circles abound on Facebook as do groups on all aspects of everything from science to his-

tory. In modern high schools, it is common to use Facebook as a learning opportunity to chat casually, to discuss formal conclusions and to expand the traditional classroom learning.

On the group or page, educators (or student leaders) can poll students about topics covered in class or topics of interest to a reporter. Educators can link to websites that provide additional information on the topic of the day to allow students who are interested to expand their knowledge. Educators can create forms and worksheets online and allow students to complete them online or move them to the teacher's drop box, thereby saving time and paper.

Finally, students can take advantage of the technology as well. They can use polls, surveys, websites and access to experts to create more than the five-paragraph paper. With readily available and inexpensive technology, students can create and edit videos, audio recordings and multimedia presentations they can publish on Facebook for everyone in the group to see and to learn from.

Some educators, such as **Susan Goins Newell**, MJE, of Northridge High School, Tuscaloosa, Ala., use both groups and pages with their students.

"We have a newspaper group page that we use to communicate with newspaper staff, Newell said. "We have a newspaper fan page that we use to communicate with readers." She added that both the yearbook and the newspaper staffs use Facebook to do group interviews, especially when class schedules of sources prevent face-to-face interaction. ■

# 20

## *ways to use Facebook in the classroom*

BY BRADLEY WILSON, CJE

**The statistics about Facebook paint an enlightening picture.** Facebook has more than 750 million active users. More than half of the active users log on to Facebook at least once a day. The average user has 130 friends. Clearly, Facebook has become integrated into modern culture. Also, it has become a primary method of communication for many of its users.

Because it is so pervasive in the lives of today's students, it makes sense that educators make full use of the media by utilizing the social media environment to engage students in new ways. Especially in the mass media classroom, Facebook can help students interact innovatively with their readers and with their classmates.

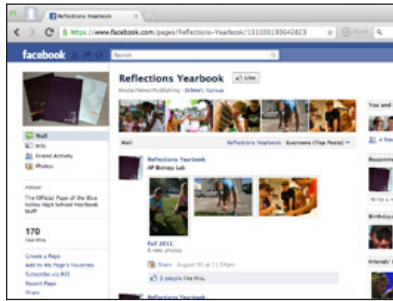
1. Involve students with a greater variety of experiences as class sizes increase. Use Facebook discussions to promote individualization and a personal connection with other students as well as between the instructor and the students.
2. Become fans of politicians to learn about their platforms and hear what they have to say firsthand.
3. Create groups for entire classes or for study groups with smaller subsets of students that allow for easy sharing of information and communication, without students having to friend one another.
4. Schedule activities that require the entire class to interact on Facebook.
5. Encourage students to follow news feeds relevant to the course material so everyone can stay current on pertinent information.
6. Keep up with news through Facebook on groups that provide news clips.
7. Conduct marketing research by using FourSquare to see what restaurants students are visiting. Solicit those restaurants for advertising.
8. Post homework through Facebook to provide easy access for students and to remind students what the instructor expects and what the deadlines are.
9. Post "discovery" websites to add relevancy to the class.
10. Post notes after each class period for students to have access for review or in case they were absent.
11. Publicize the accomplishments of individual students or the effort of an entire class. Be sure to tag all the students involved.
12. Send reminders about classroom news, upcoming tests or upcoming due dates.
13. Share multimedia content, including videos and still photos, easily with the entire class.
14. Communicate with shy students who may be hesitant to approach the teacher after class or during office hours.
15. Allow students to post reviews of movies, games, shows and books for the instructor to evaluate and for other students to read.
16. Switch Facebook into a foreign language to encourage students to develop their language skills.
17. Use polls, with the Poll app for Facebook, as an interactive teaching tool in class or as a way to facilitate getting to know one another.
18. Use the Facebook status update feed as a breaking news source for sports results, academic competition results and other campus news.
19. Stay connected with parents through social media to communicate their child's progress.
20. Promote an online discussion among students about a book they are reading or discuss a project they are working on. ■





## ABOUT FACEBOOK

Founded in February 2004, Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers. The company develops technologies that facilitate the sharing of information through the social graph, the digital mapping of people’s real-world social connections. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment.



### REFLECTIONS

Blue Valley High School, Stilwell, Kan., Jill Chittum, MJE, adviser



### THE COMMUNICATOR

Community High School, Ann Arbor, Mich., the-communicator.org, Tracy Rosewarne, adviser

## FACEBOOK REALITY

- Students are comfortable with Facebook.
- Learning how to use social networking responsibly should be a part of every class.
- Communication on Facebook is informal so students may be more willing to participate in activities on Facebook.
- Facebook inherently promotes social interchange, collaboration and teamwork.
- When students are accessing the class content more often, they will be thinking about substantive content and will be engaging in functional techniques more frequently.

## PRIVACY, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Facebook has always focused on giving people control over their experience so they can express themselves freely while knowing that their information is being shared the way they intend. Facebook’s privacy policy is TRUSTe certified, and Facebook provides simple and powerful tools that allow people to control what information they share and with whom they share it. More information can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/privacy/explanation.php>.

From its beginning, Facebook has worked to provide a safe and trusted environment by, for example, requiring that people use their real names. Facebook also works with online safety experts throughout the world and has established a global safety advisory board that it consults about safety issues. More information can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/fbsafety> and <http://www.facebook.com/security>.

SOURCE: FACEBOOK.COM



### THE ROYAL NEWS

Prince George (Va.) High School, trnwiired.org, Chris Waugaman, CJE, adviser

## TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- Get over the term “friend.” It is a verb as well as a noun. Becoming a “friend” with a student disturbs administrators and instructors. Value the relationship as one of a mentor or of an instructor using modern technology.
- Create separate Facebook accounts for your students, one for personal use and one for use in your role as an educator.
- Utilize Facebook’s privacy settings to keep your personal and professional lives separate within one account. Similarly, ask students to limit your access to their pages, feeds and status updates that may compromise your professional working relationship.
- Maintain as professional a distance on Facebook as you would in person.
- Engage students in the Facebook experience. Use applications and features within Facebook to show students the value of the social media experience. Teach students how to use social media properly.

## MORE IDEAS:

- “100 Ways You Should Be Using Facebook in Your Classroom” from [onlinecollege.org](http://onlinecollege.org)
- “50 Reasons to Invite Facebook Into Your Classroom” by Tina Barseghian from [mindshift.kqed.org](http://mindshift.kqed.org)
- “Faculty on Facebook: Confirm or Deny” by Michael Sturgeon from [leenuiversity.academia.edu](http://leenuiversity.academia.edu)



*I used to be the administrator who blocked every social-media site, and now I'm the biggest champion. I'm just someone who is passionate about engaging students and growing professionally, and I'm using these free tools to do it.* | **ERIC C. SHENINGER**, PRINCIPAL, NEW MILFORD (N.J.)  
HIGH SCHOOL IN EDUCATION WEEK

# Policy

## regarding social media in the classroom

BY MATTHEW SCHOTT, CJE

Each day when I wake up, before pouring a bowl of cereal and cup of coffee, the first thing I do is grab my phone to check texts, email and, most eagerly, Twitter.

I'm 36. I love Twitter, am friends with Facebook and am crushing pretty heavily on Google+. Did I say I'm 36?

High school students, who at their oldest are half my age, have grown up with these technologies. They have embraced them with vigor and passion. They have learned all the childish basics of social media, such as how to post ridiculous photos of themselves, post ridiculous/funny/mean/ironic/vicious/angry statuses and will "Like" pretty much anything that scrolls across their news feeds.

What they have struggled to learn during the incubatory period of social media is how to avoid the perils of social media and how to develop skills they will need to function in the job market they will enter in the future. The need is where educators, particularly journalism advisers, come in.

In his keynote at the fall JEA/NSPA convention, Facebook's Journalism Program Manager Vadim

Lavrusik said he believed people needed to stop seeing social media as micro-blogging and begin to see it as micro-publishing. Considering Lavrusik's view, journalism educators have experience that is a valuable asset to share.

In Missouri, legislators told teachers that using social media was unacceptable — under the ruse of painting them as potential pedophiles — in the classroom.

I disagree vehemently. In fact, I would say the best possible thing we could be doing is model for our students what good usage of social media looks like. How many of them know that a four- or five-line post with a photo is most likely to get clicks or that an individual who asks questions of the online community is more likely to receive responses than someone who simply posts statements?

What follows is a model social media policy. It is not perfect, but it is a start. Innovators may want to add to the policy. This is a social media document. Use it to further a discussion about how to better reach and educate our students. ■

### 5 DO'S AND 5 DON'TS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA WITH STUDENTS

**Do make use of social media as often as fits your lessons and curriculum.** | Don't allow open access to social media. Students need to learn there are appropriate times to use it. Set your privacy levels to the highest levels the medium allows. | **Do make social media a part of your classroom culture.** | Don't post links to sites without personally viewing them. | **Do encourage students to use technology (smartphone, laptop, iPad, etc.) in your room**

**when appropriate.** | Don't post things students may find offensive (politics, off-color humor, etc.) | **Do proofread and edit posts. Verify sources. Model professional expectations while online.** | Don't post about anything a teacher should not share in the classroom. | **Do consult immediately with superiors when confronting a potential problem — as teachers do when encountering a potential problem in classroom behavior.** | Don't do anything risky. Avoid swearing, advocating politics, anything that can lead to trouble.

Below is a draft model social media policy. It is a start, and like the DJNF Teacher of the Year Aaron Manfull said, a challenge. This is a public Google document. If you like what you see here, take it to your administrators and explain to them the need for social media education for our students, teachers and administrators.

This is a social media document, designed to start a discussion about how better to reach and to educate our students.

**Matthew Schott, CJE**

# MODEL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal is to create a social media model policy for school districts in Missouri that will protect students and teachers and be respectful of all parties' First Amendment rights as well as to encourage the use of technology in and out of the classroom. Instead of shunning and restricting this technology, which is often free, school districts should embrace it through increased training and sharing of best practices.

## STUDENT TRAINING

Districts will encourage social media use in English, social studies and business departments (or their equivalents) as well as in other departments. The curriculum should include materials about how to be a proper digital citizen and about the need to make sure students are aware that the laws of publishing apply when they distribute information and opinions on the Internet. Students definitely need to understand that publishing questionable content can impact them in the future. Additionally, districts should stress the positive uses for technology and social media, such as forceful writing, accurate statements, correct grammar, photography skills, marketing, networking and more. Districts should encourage teachers to incorporate social media into regular assignments.

## TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

Districts will regularly provide training to update teachers and administrators about the newest ways to use technology and social media in the classroom. Training will utilize techniques to improve writing, grammar, photography skills, marketing, networking, etc. They will use the techniques to further the learning mastery of students as documented by curriculum goals. Additionally, teachers will be strongly encouraged to use

social media in a responsible way in their classrooms to model proper social media behaviors to their students.

Teachers and administrators who choose to post to their social media accounts should understand the perils of sharing with students on their social media accounts. Teachers who opt to utilize social media in their classroom will inform their department chairs, assistant principals of instruction and building principals of their intentions to do so.

## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

As the social media landscape is constantly changing, each district shall designate an employee or employees within the district who will be responsible for finding materials to be distributed to administrators at both the district and building levels as well as to teachers and to students. The educator(s) should have a strong background both in technology and in technology usage in the classroom as well as extensive knowledge of free expression laws.

## HIRING

As part of the hiring process of teachers and administrators, the district shall conduct a background search that includes a search of the applicant's social media history and activity. In addition, as part of new employee training, there shall be at least two hours of training on the district's use of social media within the district. Also, the district shall provide new hires an extensive list of resources for using social media in the classroom.

## MONITORING

The 21st century classroom does not end at the classroom door. It is expansive and incorporates varied forms of communication. Teachers and administrators should begin viewing their classrooms and social media as one in the same. In

social media situations, all parties should view discussions online as important as they would discussions in classrooms.

School accounts will be monitored for questionable issues per district policy, but districts should empower their employees to use technology regularly. As they would in their classroom, when a teacher observes any inappropriate behavior via social media, that teacher should report it in accordance with the policy. Districts should incorporate appropriate standards and discipline procedures in their codes of conduct

Each school in the district shall maintain at least one social media account (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc.) to use for communicating school procedures and for promoting activities — all as part of a diligent effort to explain policies and to distribute information about the school to its community. In addition, the district shall encourage all of its student media (newspapers, websites, yearbooks, broadcast outlets), as well as other student organizations, to maintain social media presences. Finally, teachers employing social media in the classroom shall inform the building principal (or designated administrator) of their intent to use social media for educational purposes.

Administrators should be trained, as they are for other valid educational instruction methods, to evaluate the teachers' usage of social media for instruction. ■



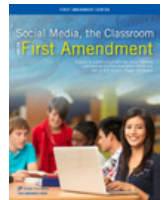


# USING FACEBOOK IN A MASS MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

**BRAINSTORMING ROTATION** | Use the following questions to stimulate critical thinking skills about developing a helpful staff process and to encourage proactive decisions that enhance the credibility of media. Learn to solve problems before they develop.

**DIVIDE THE STUDENTS INTO FIVE GROUPS** | Give a copy of a set of questions (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) to each group. Set a timer (10 minutes or less — a length that permits each group to consider all five questions during the same class period). When the timer rings, a group leader must hand its question to a neighboring group. The discussion process, which should emphasize logical arguments and pragmatic suggestions, will prepare students to work on a writing challenge (see Persuasive Presentations, page 15), which you can use on another day. Circulate as “the interrogator.”

1. Should a story be written using interviews obtained exclusively by using information on Facebook? Why or why not? Advantages? Dangers? Journalists’ responsibility to interview sources in person? How does the possibility of “Facebook reporting” affect how editors and advisers should train reporters? Why must they remember that not everyone has an account on Facebook or other social media?
2. How reliable is information obtained from sources reached on Facebook or other social media sites? Is it as reliable as information obtained in any other way? Why or why not? How can information gathered online be confirmed offline? Why is independent confirmation important? Why may Facebook responses require a more thorough confirmation effort?
3. Because Facebook is a “social” media site, it can be easy for a potential source to misunderstand the intentions of a reporter who is seeking information on Facebook. How can reporters avoid this problem? What kind of checking should reporters do with editors before sending questions or surveys on Facebook? What process should the staff have to maximize communication success?
4. News organizations, including school media, should encourage responsible use of such networks to form connections, to find story ideas and to locate sources. Do you agree? Why or why not? How can staffs safeguard the importance and the results of social-media reporting?
5. People are often open with information on Facebook, more open than they might be in person. Further, teenagers might not think about the consequences of sharing what they tell reporters. To guarantee the goal of minimizing harm, a reporter may need to be sure a responsible adult knows the teen is a part of a story that is going to be published. Do you agree? Why or why not? When are parental contacts necessary? When, during the reporting process, should journalists make the decision to talk to parents? What are the most professional methods to use?



**FIRST AMENDMENT CENTER**

<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/how-to-teach-about-the-first-amendment>



**POYNTER**

<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/everyday-ethics/93592/poynter-newsrooms-develop-social-networking-policies-for-journalists-on-facebook-myspace-twitter/>



**STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER**

<http://www.splc.org/>



**JEA PRESS RIGHTS COMMISSION BLOG**

<http://www.jeasprc.org/>

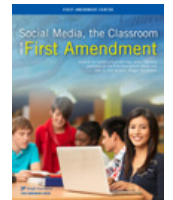
ANSWERS to Basic Considerations from Exercise 1 | 1. T 2. F 3. T 4. T 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. F 9. T 10. F



# USING FACEBOOK RESPONSIBLY AT SCHOOL

**BASIC CONSIDERATIONS** | Use the websites resources. Circle the T for each true statement and the F for each false statement. Be prepared to defend your choice.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. The same ethical principles apply online as in print.   |
| T | F | 2. When obtaining information from a source online, reporters should not identify themselves as reporters unless absolutely necessary.   |
| T | F | 3. Reporters should verify their source and confirm with someone else what they learned.   |
| T | F | 4. Because not everyone has a Facebook account, reporters should not rely completely on sources that are on Facebook. Journalists should constantly strive for diverse representations in their stories.   |
| T | F | 5. Reporters should interview sources in person or over the phone whenever possible to better obtain inflections and emotions as well as to better engage in follow-up questions.  |
| T | F | 6. Because it is easy for sources to misunderstand reporters' intentions, it is reporters' responsibility to tell sources who they are, what they are doing and where their work will appear.  |
| T | F | 7. Reporters, who should be transparent with the audience as well as with sources, should let readers, listeners and viewers know how they contacted people, in what context they gathered the information and how they verified it (or didn't).                           |
| T | F | 8. When contacting anyone, especially teenagers, in a situation that makes them vulnerable — such as when reporting on drug or alcohol use, teen pregnancy or other sensitive issues — scholastic reporters should never ask to talk to an adult to protect their sources. |
| T | F | 9. Reporters should clearly label verified information they know to be true and label opinion as such.   |
| T | F | 10. Credibility is less important online because online media are not held to the same standards as well-established print media are. Online reporters simply cannot maintain an independence from advertisers and sources.  |



**FIRST AMENDMENT CENTER**  
<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/how-to-teach-about-the-first-amendment>



**POYNTER**  
<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/everyday-ethics/93592/poynter-newsrooms-develop-social-networking-policies-for-journalists-on-facebook-myspace-twitter/>



**STUDENT PRESS LAW CENTER**  
<http://www.splc.org/>



**JEAS PRESS RIGHTS COMMISSION BLOG**  
<http://www.jeasprc.org/>

**PERSUASIVE PRESENTATIONS** | Based on what students have learned about the use of social media and journalism, each group should prepare a rational argument about the value of social media as a journalism tool to present to one of the following categories: media producers (publication staff), media consumers (readers, viewers, listeners), parents, school faculty, administrators/school board members, community leaders/advertisers. Groups may draw “category” names or do it on a first-selected, first-served basis.

Allow class time for the groups to work on building a clear, logical and effective presentation. Then they should post a succinct summary on Facebook. In succeeding days, allow a brief time period for the groups to present their case and for other students, who should be checking the Facebook postings, to suggest challenges for them to consider and ways to strengthen the logical orientation for each “category.”

The goal is to be able to articulate sound educational and journalistic principles as students develop critical thinking skills about current communication opportunities and responsibilities. Each group should appoint a leader to submit a written summary of its best arguments, as targeted to a specific audience. Combine the summaries as a Google document for all journalism students.