GETTING STARTED

TWITTER MARKETING

Wake County Public School System
Communications Department
How to create a Twitter page

How to Sign Up for Twitter

Go to https://twitter.com/signup.

On the “Join Twitter today” page, enter your school’s name in the “full name” field. Enter an email address that you would like your account to be tied to, and a password you can remember. For your username, try your school’s name first (e.g. CombsES, CombsElementary, CombsElemSchool). If your name is taken, try adding WCPSS to it (e.g. CombsES_WCPSS)

After you’ve filled in all fields, click “Sign up.”

You’ll be prompted to enter a phone number for verification code text messages. We suggest you skip this step by clicking “Skip” under the “Next” button.

There are now six steps to complete. On Step 1 of 6, click “Let’s go!” to continue setting up your account.

Step 2 asks you to add a photo.
This is where you will be able to upload your profile image (the small one that will appear with your tweets). We suggest using your school’s logo or mascot image here. The best image size to use here is 400x400. When you’ve done that, click “Continue” at the top right of the screen.

Step 3 asks what topics interest you.
What you choose will generate a list of accounts it will suggest you to follow. What makes your school special. You don’t have to select any accounts. You can simply uncheck the defaulted “Popular accounts” choice and click “Continue” at the top right of the screen.

Step 4 suggests that you import your email contacts.
Since this is not a personal account, you can skip this stop by clicking “No thanks.”

Step 5 suggests accounts to follow.
You may choose which of those accounts that you’d like to follow or uncheck the “select all” box at the top of the page to not select any. When you’ve made your selections, click “Continue” at the top right of the screen.

Step 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 a WCPSS school and touts what makes your school special.
- Add your school location
- Add your school’s website address.
- Choose a theme color for your page.
- Add a header photo or keep it a solid color. Make sure the photo you pick is high quality and is horizontal enough that it doesn’t cut off heads. Crop the photo to 1500x500.
- Click “Save changes.”

Simplify your social media life

A common misperception about social media is that it takes a lot of time to manage. You can use a tool like Hootsuite to help organize your communications. HootSuite is a social media dashboard which has the advantage of posting to multiple social networks. It offers scheduling, multiple postings and visibility of all your social media platforms in one place and is useful to track mentions of your school.

www.HootSuite.com

Do you have a unified voice?

Make sure your school’s has one main twitter account that represents the entire school community.

It’s fine to have @SmithSchoolPrincipal and @SmithSchoolBuses and @SmithSchoolAthletics, but these aren’t replacements for your school’s main twitter account. Your school needs a unified voice. Make it clear to your parents which account is the ‘official’ school account.

- Link the official twitter account in your school website’s footer.
- Include your school name in the Twitter handle (e.g. @SmithElemSchool or @SmithES_WCPSS)
- Use your bio to make it clear that this is the official account. (e.g. The official Twitter for Smith Elementary School. We’re a @WCPSS IB Magnet school located in Raleigh, N.C.)
- Other school accounts can tag the official school account in their bio (e.g. We’re the Media Center at @SmithElemSchool; School bus updates at @SmithElemSchool)
- Search and shut down all inactive Twitter accounts related to your school.
- Establish a voice for your account that is consistent in tone and personality. Some posts call for a straightforward, just-the-facts tone. Others lend themselves to humor. Take time to develop your school’s voice.
- Power out? Phones down? Send important messages from your school’s main account. Make sure your principal and key staff have access to post in case of an emergency.
Twitter tips

Choose your words carefully.
You only have 140 characters so make them count!

Post photos.
Lots of photos. And GIFS. Twitter limits users to 4 photos per post and limits video 30-seconds.

Use shortened links
It only takes one minute to set up a free account on bitly.com. Once you’ve set up your account, you’ll also be able to track how many people clicked on your link. 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. You can’t edit a tweet, but you can delete it.

Post regularly.
If possible, one tweet a day is a good start. Retweets are okay, but remember - your followers want your original content.

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 and avoid using “edu-speak.”

Answer questions and engage your community.
Answer any reasonable question tweeted to your account or received as a direct message. If you do not know the answer to the question, find someone who does. Refrain from engaging in an argument with anyone. If things begin to get heated, inform your principal and take the conversation off social media.

Monitor your mentions.
Make sure whoever is managing your account is actively monitoring it. If a comment contains profanity, you can block the user. If a comment contains a complaint, immediately respond. If you find a tweet that contains a threat against anyone at your school, or the school in general, get screen shots of it and report it to the principal and WCPSS security immediately.

Recognize and thank community and business partners.
For example, if Harris Teeter donated to a school event, use their Twitter handle in a thank you tweet. Tagging the business may result in more people seeing your tweet and that could translate into more followers.

Tags and hashtags are different
Tagging someone means including their Twitter handle in your tweet, e.g. @wcpss Doing so means they and all their followers will see the tweet. Hashtags don’t connect you to a specific account, but rather tie tweets together with a keyword, e.g. #WakeVision. Clicking on the hashtag will show all the other tweets that have used it. Use hashtags to improve your visibility and find like-minded people and organizations.

If you put a tag as the first word in your tweet, add a period before the handle (ex: .@wcpss is the best district in the nation). Without that period, Twitter thinks the tweet is supposed to only be seen by the person with that handle.

Make sure your students’ safety is a priority.
Be sure all students in photos have signed media releases. Don’t share your students’ personal information.

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

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 the link you sent out.

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

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