

Facebook, and other online communities, can be a very powerful communication or educational tool for today's society. The following guidelines have been established to provide all Guilford County Schools (GCS) employees direction on the appropriate use of Facebook and other online communities.

## Personal Use

GCS employees are encouraged to keep their personal lives personal even in the digital world where personal and professional can become blurred. District procedure prohibits employees from "friending" students on their personal Facebook account. Procedures also discourage "friending" parents of students. If you have a personal Facebook account, the following response is recommended when denying such requests.

### **Sentence for staff to respond to "friend" requests on their personal Facebook page:**

If you are a student or parent requesting to be my "friend" on Facebook, please do not be surprised or offended if I ignore your request. As an employee of Guilford County Schools (GCS), procedures and practice discourage me from "friending" students or parents on my personal Facebook page. I would encourage you to friend or "like" our classroom, project, school or GCS Facebook page.

## Professional Use

When using Facebook professionally as an employee of GCS, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Before doing anything on Facebook, contact your school administrator. A designated school administrator must have access to any classroom, project, school or district page created.
- When using Facebook with a particular class, or group of students or parents, the page should be set up as an "Official" page.
- When using Facebook as a communication tool with the masses, the page should be set up as a "Community" page.
- The personal security for the individual establishing the page should be set so students cannot view personal information about the employee. For example: set all security "for friends only." Students and colleagues may not realize that if they sign-up as a "fan" of someone's page, that person can see their personal information, unless they have set up the appropriate levels of security.
- When building a page you must identify the page in the page description area as a classroom or organization in the "Guilford County Schools." All GCS style guidelines for names, colors and logo usage should be followed on any official pages linked to a GCS school, classroom, project, team or for other district-related purposes. If you need assistance in using the guidelines or transforming your current site to meet these standards, contact District Relations, 336-370-8997.

- The Guilford County Schools Rules of Engagement must be posted on any page created.
- The creator of the page is responsible for monitoring content on the page and deleting any posts that violate the rules of engagement.
- Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, all of the above guidelines must be followed. If you currently have a page established for work purposes, please be sure that it meets the above criteria.

Failure to follow the established guidelines may result in disciplinary action. GCS Facebook Rules of Engagement must be posted on any page associated with the District, a school in the District or the official duties of any staff member.

## Rules of Engagement

The goal of using Facebook by Guilford County Schools (GCS), all of the schools in the District, and teachers or sponsors associated with those schools, is to share important information with our public and engage in an open and respectful dialogue. To help us accomplish this goal, we ask that you abide by the following guidelines:

- Open conversation – not personal issues or complaints about students and/or school personnel. This page is not intended to circumvent regular communication channels for sharing personal issues and concerns, including personnel matters and student concerns. Comments regarding a personal issue with the District, a school, student or a staff member will be removed.
- Be respectful. Personal attacks or comments that are deemed offensive to any member of our community will not be tolerated. Inappropriate remarks and profanity will be removed.
- Want to boost your product sales? Running for a political office? Publish a personal Facebook page, and leave ours for sharing news and insights about our district, schools and activities.
- Stay on topic. This is a page dedicated to the education of students of GCS. Let's keep the conversation related to our district, schools and activities. Comments of all kinds are welcome so long as they directly relate to our district, schools and activities.
- Have a question for a specific employee? Contact them privately. Fans should not expect responses to every question or comment posted on this page.
- Be aware of the mission. The mission of GCS is education. Please be certain that your comments are appropriate for an educational environment and fans of all ages.
- Be factual. Blatantly inaccurate information will not be allowed. False information will be removed and factual information will be posted.

- Employees of GCS may have personal Facebook pages. Don't be surprised or offended if your request to "friend" them is ignored. District policy encourages staff to keep their personal lives personal.
- This page is yours and we want you to feel comfortable sharing your views about GCS, schools or activities. Abuse of the above guidelines can lead to removal of a specific posting or the blocking/removal from our fan page.

