

Exploring School-based Social Media Efforts

While using social media services to reach out to school communities was still a relatively novel practice in the fall of 2010, several buildings had already worked to create a presence in popular forums like Twitter and Facebook. One of the best ways to build confidence in your own social media communication plan is to explore their efforts. This handout can help you to track your reactions while exploring the social media efforts of three different schools and/or principals.

Name of School and/or Principal	Social Media Service	Web Address
New Milford High School <i>New Milford, New Jersey</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/newmilfordhs
John F. Kennedy Middle School <i>Atlanta, Georgia</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/johnfkennedymys
Hamilton Elementary School <i>Chicago, Illinois</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/HamiltonCPS
New Milford High School <i>New Milford, New Jersey</i>	Facebook	http://bit.ly/newmilfordhs
Lady's Island Middle <i>Beaufort, SC</i>	Facebook	http://bit.ly/limiddle
Peace River Elementary School <i>Port Charlotte, FL</i>	Facebook	http://bit.ly/peaceriveres
Eric Sheninger, Principal <i>New Milford High School New Milford, New Jersey</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/NMHS_Principal
Scott Elias, Principal <i>Conrad Ball Middle School Loveland, Colorado</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/scottelias
Melinda Miller, Principal <i>Willard East Elementary Willard, Missouri</i>	Twitter	http://twitter.com/mmiller7571

Name and Location of School:		
<p>Messaging Content What types of messages is this school sharing with social media tools?</p> <p>(Check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrations <input type="checkbox"/> Instant Extensions <input type="checkbox"/> Decisions and Details <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Updates <p>Which messages seemed to be shared the most often? Which do you think that stakeholders find the most valuable?</p>	<p>Messaging Engagement How is this school crafting messages that will catch the attention of its audiences?</p> <p>(Check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing links to photos. <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing links to videos. <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing links to valuable resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Posting content in real-time. <input type="checkbox"/> Providing opportunities for audiences to interact and respond to school messages. <p>Is the content being shared by this school more or less engaging than the content that you're currently sharing with your stakeholders? Why?</p>	<p>Responsiveness What evidence of two-way communication can you find in this school's social media efforts?</p> <p>(Check all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School asks for input from stakeholders on important topics. <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders have the ability to respond to every message. <input type="checkbox"/> School responds to every message posted by a stakeholder. <input type="checkbox"/> Dissenting opinions are respected in two-way interactions between school and stakeholders. <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders are comfortable enough to respond to one another's questions and concerns in social media forums.
<p>Reflections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What was impressive about the communication patterns of this school? What would you replicate in your own building? Was there anything in the communication patterns of this school that left you concerned? Intimidated? Why? What kinds of practical action steps would you have to take if you wanted to start similar communication patterns in your own building? Would new tools be needed? New training? New permissions? 		

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