

October DCCPTA Speech by Marla Bryant, PTA Parent, DCPS Good News Ambassador, Communications Chair, and Facebook Administrator for James Weldon Johnson PTSA, New Berlin Elementary PTA and Paxon School for Advanced Studies PTSA pages

THE GOAL OF THE PAGE:

Yes, the obvious goal of a PTA Facebook page is to communicate with your parents, teachers and students, but the REAL GOAL is to increase members and membership dollars in your local PTA chapter!!! Be sure to post your local PTA's membership form and links that show the benefits of PTA on the page at least a couple of times a month! These dollars are what supports many of the school programs that your school may have cut from its budget, which then helps teachers and students!!!

CONTENT:

A great place to get started with content is to share school or PTA success stories, breaking education news, grant deadlines, calls to action concerning education-related legislation, upcoming school events, and information shared by National PTA, Florida PTA, Duval County Council of PTA's and other education advocacy pages that your page can like and follow. It is important that your PTSA page extend the advocacy that PTA does on behalf of students, teachers and education in general. Post news articles that support the lobbying efforts of PTA on behalf of education, and you also can post education-related news articles even if they don't pertain to a PTA initiative.

You also can visit school and PTA websites for information to post. It's ideal to contact the administrators at your school and let them know you are starting a page and that you can get the information out quickly via the Facebook page if they are willing to forward you the information. Keep in mind this is not a school Facebook page, so you still manage the content according to PTA guidelines found on the national PTA website. You also can check the monthly DCPS School Board Agendas to alert parents to issues they may want to follow, and you can promote the broadcast of the meetings too. If you follow your feeder schools' PTA/PTSAs, that also may provide posts you can share from their page to yours.

Remember, ANY STUDENT PICTURE FEATURED ON THIS PAGE MUST BE MEDIA RELEASED!!! You will have to ask administrators or teachers to check every person pictured if they send the picture to you. One way to get around this is to take pictures of students, without showing their face, either from behind or from too far away.

One important rule on this page is to only include FACTS not OPINIONS!!! This is not your personal Facebook page, so no stating your opinion about all the controversy in education. Let your news article do the work!

SCHEDULING POSTS:

Page posts can be scheduled up to 6 months in advance on Facebook. This means if there are PTA meetings, school events or anything else you know about, you can go ahead and schedule a post. A good time to do this is at the end of the Summer, when schools are adding most dates to their new school calendar, but be sure to check DCPS website for holiday schedules, teacher planning days and report card distribution dates, which you can post as a reminder to your parents.

It's important to schedule at least three posts for any one event. The first post should be as soon as you know about it. The second post should be at least a week prior to the event. The final posts should be schedule the day before the event and/or the morning of the event. The key is to schedule all of these posts at different times of the day. One should be on a Saturday morning, since Facebook traffic increases on the weekends. Another should be on a weekday afternoon. Another can be in the morning with maybe another one in the evening. The key is to try to catch all of the times people typically check Facebook. Think about your audience. A post during a school day won't be seen by students (at least those following DCPS rules), so if you want to reach students with a post, a good time is at 3pm right after school. If you want to reach parents with information students really wouldn't be interested in seeing, then think about scheduling the post during the school day. Same is true on weekends. Parents get up early. Middle and high school students, not always. Think about that when you are pre-scheduling posts

Try to schedule posts at least twice a day to increase the visibility of your page. You also can post school events where you need volunteers, but make sure you include contact information so you don't have to coordinate the event.

The big thing is to tell people things more than once! *Reminders, reminders, reminders!*

VISUALS:

There are two choices in what you can post: words or pictures. Typing a status update with your information certainly is quicker but what is the most eye catching??? *A picture is worth a thousand words.* Try to add clip art from the Internet, a picture from the school event you are promoting or you can even make a colorful informational picture with apps like Phonto or Pic Collage.

Try to get an original file of any important fliers that come home, because multiple colors on a sheet will be more eye catching than the black and white copy that came home. If you cannot get an original color graphic copy, consider scanning your copy into the computer or taking a picture of it and using an app like photo shop to add a tint of color to the picture.

The big thing is to make whatever kind of post you use as eye catching as possible because you aren't just trying to make them stand out on your page....you're trying to get them noticed against ALL of the other posts that your followers get in their news feed!!! Many of these pages are not like the volunteer amateur page you are doing, so make it look as good as you possibly can!!!

TRICKS AND SHORTCUTS:

If you have an Apple device, download the Pages Manager app for your PTSA Facebook page. You can schedule posts directly from your mobile phone! Another benefit of this app is that it will show you exactly how many people saw your particular post, which can give your direct feedback on what impacts your followers.

Notifications will show up in your regular Facebook page, and when you reply, you and your administrators automatically are posting, liking and commenting as your SCHOOL PTSA FACEBOOK PAGE! There is a way to switch this temporarily, but that must be done from a computer.

Invite your friends and teachers to Like your PTSA Page, and post a status to ask them to do the same. The goal is to GROW YOUR AUDIENCE, so you GET MORE PTA MEMBERSHIPS!!!

Create a special profile picture that includes the official PTA logo(every child, one voice) with your local chapter's name, and make your cover photo a nice picture of the welcome sign or the campus. Make sure the title of your page includes BOTH the school name AND either PTA or PTSA!!! For big events, like September Membership Month, you may want to change your logo to one that coordinates with that effort.

INCREASING LIKES AND FOLLOWERS:

Your goal is to get people to "like" your posts and to comment on your page, so that your page shows up in the news feed of friends who may then want to start following the page. If they follow your page, then hopefully they will join your PTA. You can see on your page what posts are popular with your followers based on the number of people who click on it and see it. It is very important to find content that engages your fans and encourages them to want to engage with you. A great way to help you gauge this will be by the number of likes, shares, and comments you receive on your posts.

A FACEBOOK PAGE IS NOT A FACEBOOK GROUP. Keep in mind that if you choose to create a Facebook Group, the only people who can be in that group are people you are friends with, and the same rules do not apply! You cannot pre-schedule posts on a Group, and a group will not be seen by people unless it's public.

Facebook is a great way to market your PTA. For more tips, visit the National PTA page and look for "Social Media Tipsheets". The direct link is [www.pta.org/files/NPTA_Social_Media_Tipsheets_\(2\).pdf](http://www.pta.org/files/NPTA_Social_Media_Tipsheets_(2).pdf) The website also has suggestions if you decide to use a different social medium such as Twitter, YouTube or Blogging.



National PTA[®] Social Media: Facebook Tip Sheet



Facebook is a great way to do Social Media marketing for your PTA. Facebook is perfect for brand awareness because it is free advertising and promotion for your local PTA, it allows you to share information with your members, it will enable you to start conversations on various topics, and it gives them the chance to share with their friends as well.

Reference: Mansfield, Heather (2011) *A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good*. USA: McGraw-Hill

- 1. Create Your Voice.** Your voice will often be found in the status updates of your fans, which means it is very important to find content that engages your fans and encourages them to want to engage with you. A great way to help you gauge this will be by the number of likes, shares, and comments you receive on your posts.
- 2. Fun and Informative.** A great place to get started with content is to share success stories, breaking news, grant deadlines, calls to action, events, and information shared by National PTA.
- 3. Professional vs. Personal.** While adding personality and flair is important, keep in mind that there is a difference between a personal Facebook page and your PTA's professional one. Set up rules of etiquette for your PTA's Facebook page so that everyone knows the rules and can help make it a safe place for sharing information.
- 4. More Than One.** Be sure to have at least two people (although three would be best) as administrators of your PTA Facebook page. This way if someone is sick, traveling, unreachable or has to leave for any reason there are multiple people with access to the page. This also helps spread the responsibility for posting and sharing content, lessening the pressure on everyone.
- 5. Posting Limits.** Be sure to limit the number of posts. Too many posts will cause people to hide or un-Like your Facebook page. Ideally, four to six posts per week is best, though you should not post more than twice a day.
- 6. Content Sharing.** Be sure to share links, videos, and pictures whenever possible in your posts. This will help increase your PTA's visibility and activity. Facebook is all about sharing information.
- 7. Tagging Gold.** Tag sponsors and supporters whenever possible; this will help them to keep up with what you are doing and engage them more. Plus, it gives them greater visibility among your PTA members and supporters.
- 8. Events.** Create events and send them to the fans of your page. It will remind them about your unit and your events, and it will help you engage them in a new way.
- 9. Do Not Automate.** It is always tempting to automatically sync several social media platforms to Facebook so you only have to send one status update. However, avoid doing this as much as possible because each social media platform is unique in the culture of the community and the way content is shared.
- 10. Encourage.** Do not forget to encourage your PTA board members, volunteers, students (if you are a PTSA), teachers, and families to engage and be active on your PTA page. This will help create a flow of information and sharing that will encourage everyone! Most of all, do not forget to have fun, learn a lot, and remember that social media is just another resource for you, your members, and the parents and teachers that will give every child one voice!

If you want more information about how your PTA can best utilize social media, please contact our Communications Department. This tip sheet is one of many resources that National PTA offers members. Go to **PTA.org** for more!

National PTA Social Media

Facebook - www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation

YouTube - Youtube.com/nationalpta

Twitter - @NationalPTA

PTA Great Idea Bank - www.ptagreatideabank.org



National PTA® Social Media: Twitter Tip Sheet

**National
PTA®**
everychild.onevoice.®

Companies and organizations use **Twitter** primarily for sharing about a product, brand or a program. It is also used to make announcements and share breaking news. All updates on Twitter should be 140 characters or less. The tips below will help increase your followers and enable you to get your message to a larger audience.

Reference: Mansfield, Heather (2011) A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good. USA: McGraw-Hill

1. **Develop Your Twitter Voice.** The kind of content and the tone your members and followers respond to will help you give your Twitter voice personality. Your ultimate goal should be to inspire action and reaction from your followers.
2. **Track Your Links!!!** Use a Twitter app like Bit.ly or Ow.ly to track your links. They shrink your long links which allows more characters for tweeting. It also provides useful statistics on the number of people that click on your links.
3. **Tweet your Content as Well as the Content of Others.** Master the art of both retweeting and responding. Tweet articles or blog posts from your favorite newspapers, bloggers, and partner organizations. These practices will encourage your followers to retweet your content and information.
4. **Follow on a 1:1 Ratio.** If you have 1,000 followers, then you should follow 1,000 Twitterers in return. This will help your visibility and let your followers know that you are vested in them.
5. **Follow People with Similar Interests.** Help increase your visibility and understanding of your audience by following users with similar interests that are relevant to your goals and objectives. Do not forget to tag them in your messages by using the @ symbol.
6. **Integrate.** To maximize the success of your Twitter efforts, integrate into other online and offline materials. Incorporate a Twitter feed on your website, add a link to follow Twitter into direct mail pieces, and include a "share" button or Twitter link in an e-mail or e-newsletter.
7. **Drive Website Traffic.** 140 characters does not provide much room for detail. Offer a hook and lead your followers to your website or PTA.org for more information.
8. **Tweet Often.** Experts recommend tweeting four to six times per day. For some local units that may be too overwhelming. Twitter is most active from 9 am to 12 pm in any given time zone so focus your attention on tweeting during that time span.
9. **Use Hashtags Strategically.** Hashtags (#) allow Twitterers to discuss issues and events on Twitter in real time. They also help to organize tweets, spread information and find new friends. Tweets should not have more than one or two hashtags.
10. **Design your Twitter Profile to Match Your Local PTA logo.** Try to blog once a week and at the same time every week. Followers appreciate consistency and routine. Even if you just describe what you are working on this week, share it with the people who have invested time in your blog.

If you want more information about how your PTA can best utilize social media, please contact our Communications Department. This tip sheet is one of many resources that National PTA offers members. Go to PTA.org for more!

National PTA Social Media

Facebook - www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation

YouTube - Youtube.com/nationalpta

Twitter - @NationalPTA

PTA Great Idea Bank - www.ptagreatideabank.org



National PTA® Social Media: YouTube Tip Sheet



YouTube is the social web site that lets people upload online videos and participate in free video-sharing, commenting, liking, and re-posting. YouTube allows registered users to put their videos and share video clips online and share with others.

Reference: Mansfield, Heather (2011) *A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good*. USA: McGraw-Hill

- 1. Create Your Story.** The main goal of YouTube is to tell a story with video, music, pictures, etc. This can then be shared with your PTA members, parents, teachers, school administrators, and your community.
- 2. Fun and Informative.** Storytelling on YouTube is meant to be fun, creative, and informative.
- 3. Searchable.** Be sure to tag your videos so they can be searched and found by PTA members, parents, teachers, and anyone interested in the PTA mission.
- 4. Comments.** Social media is about engaging and creating a conversation, so be sure to enable comments on your videos.
- 5. Content Sharing.** Some of the best and more engaging aspects of YouTube is the ability to share among other platforms. Do not forget to share your own videos on other PTA platforms and encourage your members and followers to share as well.
- 6. Tagging Gold.** Tag sponsors and supporters whenever possible; this will help them to keep up with what you are doing and engage them more. Plus it gives them greater visibility among your PTA members and supporters.
- 7. Channels.** YouTube has the ability to create a space that holds all the videos uploaded by your PTA group. Go to youtube.com/create_account. Be sure the username you sign up with is the one you want included on your channel.
- 8. Descriptions.** The description you give your channel should be short and simple. No one wants to read on YouTube; they want to watch a story of some sort.
- 9. Thank You.** Do not forget to do a "Thank you" video or a year in review video to promote your accomplishments and let volunteers know how much their work is appreciated. The shout outs are always a great way to get additional shares.
- 10. Encourage.** Do not forget to encourage your PTA board members, volunteers, students (if you are a PTSA), teachers, and families to engage and be active on your PTA page. This will help create a flow of information and sharing that will encourage everyone!

Most of all, do not forget to have fun, learn a lot, and remember that social media is just another resource for you, your members, and the parents and teachers that will help your members speak for every child with one, powerful voice!

If you want more information about how your PTA can best utilize social media, please contact our Communications Department. This tip sheet is one of many resources that National PTA offers members. Go to [PTA.org](https://pta.org) for more!

National PTA Social Media

Facebook - www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation

YouTube - youtube.com/nationalpta

Twitter - [@NationalPTA](https://twitter.com/NationalPTA)

PTA Great Idea Bank - www.ptagreatideabank.org



National PTA[®] Social Media: Blogging Tip Sheet

**National
PTA[®]**
everychild.one voice.[™]

Blogging allows your local PTAs to have a consistent stream of fresh, timely new content to tweet, share on Facebook, use in your e-newsletter, and so on. Blogs allow PTAs to tell their stories, break news, comment on breaking news, and share resources quickly. While there are no set rules for creating a blog and writing blog content, here are some guidelines to make your PTA blog effective.

Reference: Marisfield, Heather (2011) *A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good*. USA: McGraw-Hill

1. **Blogs need to make a strong first impression.** When designing a blog the template should be simple, visually powerful, and spacious. Too much clutter and multiple columns can easily overwhelm the reader.
2. **Feature the ability to subscribe to your e-newsletter and join your social networking communities.** The upper right corner of your blog is the most valuable section of the page in terms of visibility and impact. Feature the ability to subscribe to your newsletter, a campaign, and any social networking icons in that spot. As blog traffic increases so will new subscribers, friends, followers and fans.
3. **Blog titles are priority. Make sure the blog title is bold and engaging.** It should also include key terms and words relating to your subject matter.
4. **Emphasize quality content.** The length of blog posts is not as important as the quality and relevance of the blog posts. Content should be important and useful to your audience. The content should engage readers and make it worth their time. Word use should be efficient—don't waste words. Only add words that support your points. Avoid fluff.
5. **Optimize content for web reading.** People tend to scan online articles rather than read them word for word. Use bullet lists whenever possible. Boldface keywords (or people's names) to break up long sentences and paragraphs.
6. **Allow comments but moderate them.** All blogging platforms have a notification system that allows you to moderate comments before they go live. You should allow comments but you don't have to approve them all, particularly if they are rude and disrespectful in tone.
7. **Add share and search functionality buttons.** Make sure the blog platform you choose automatically comes with share and search functionality or that you have the ability to add a share plug in.
8. **Use photos/videos in all blog posts.** Blog posts with images tend to get more traction. Post at least one photo per blog post if possible. You can also do a quick Google Image or Flickr Creative Commons search if you have nothing in-house to use.
9. **Create "Top Ten" posts.** Posting a blog about the top ten reasons your PTA is awesome is a great way to showcase your organization in a short, concise and interesting way. Use top tens or top fives to give people information on your PTA.
10. **Be consistent.** Try to blog once a week and at the same time every week. Followers appreciate consistency and routine. Even if you just describe what you are working on this week, share it with the people who have invested time in your blog.
11. **Share your blog content.** Cross promote your blog content on your other social networks like Facebook and Twitter.
12. **Solicit engagement from readers.** Ask people to comment and email ideas. Post polls to survey ideas. Keeping readers engaged will keep them returning.

If you want more information about how your PTA can best utilize social media, please contact our Communications Department. This tip sheet is one of many resources that National PTA offers members. Go to PTA.org for more!

National PTA Social Media

Facebook - www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation

YouTube - Youtube.com/nationalpta

Twitter - @NationalPTA

PTA Great Idea Bank - www.ptagreatideabank.org