

## **Policy for Official Social Media Accounts**

Great Hearts recognizes the importance and benefits of communicating through social media. Social media is a powerful vehicle through which Great Hearts may disseminate relevant news to its community, listen to voices and perceptions of the Great Hearts community, connect, and build goodwill. Social networks and other online media are great tools for engagement and two-way communication, but there is the potential for significant risks associated with inappropriate use. Existing legal responsibilities and policies remain in place when Great Hearts employees use social media.

### **Audience for this Policy**

- This policy is intended for all students, staff, and parent volunteers who manage or contribute to official Great Hearts social media channels, which are defined as channels that speak on behalf of Great Hearts and have some oversight by Great Hearts staff. These include, but are not limited to, channels for Academies, athletic and extracurricular departments and offices at Great Hearts. Social media channels can include blogs, wikis and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr and LinkedIn, but are not limited to these.
- This policy DOES NOT pertain to student groups or to the personal and private use of social media by students, parents and staff.

### **Policy for Official Social Media Accounts at Great Hearts**

This policy ONLY applies to Great Hearts students, faculty, staff, and parent volunteers who are authorized to speak on behalf of Great Hearts through social media. This includes anyone managing or contributing to a social media channel on behalf of a school, academic department, office or other official entity at Great Hearts. Social media channels can include blogs, wikis, social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.), and other media yet to be developed in a dynamic communications field. This policy only applies to those individuals when they are posting on such official sites and/or when they otherwise speak as an authorized representative of the Great Hearts. It does not apply to other social media communications and postings that such individuals may make on personal social media sites so long as such communications do not indicate that the individual is speaking on behalf of Great Hearts. See guidelines for Great Hearts employees' personal use of social media.

This is intended to be a living document, which will reflect Great Hearts' current needs and may adjust to future changes in social media.

### **Authorized Communications**

Before creating any official social media account at Great Hearts, you must fill out and submit the [Social Media Account Request Form](#). If applicable, the communications lead at your Academy will meet with you to discuss communications strategies specific to your school or department. If any social media channels are approved by your communications lead, you will then meet with the Digital Communications team to discuss social media policies at Great Hearts as well as strategy, goals, messaging, and best practices. All official social media accounts at Great Hearts, with the name and contact information for the account manager, must be registered with your headmaster and office manager. You should only post on behalf of Great Hearts or its affiliates in an official capacity where you have been explicitly authorized to do so. You should only create an account in the name of a recognized Great Hearts entity if you are authorized to represent that entity. Discuss with your supervisor whether you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval to respond, or when

you have questions about the appropriateness of content for posting. Take a moment to think about what you are posting before you hit the publish/post button.

## **Confidentiality**

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Great Hearts, or Great Hearts employees, students, parents, affiliates, or alumni that would violate such persons' rights to privacy under applicable federal and state laws and regulations such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and Great Hearts policies. Non-disclosure agreements that prohibit the Great Hearts from disclosing information also bind its employees from disclosing such information.

## **Privacy**

Do not post anything to an official social media channel that should not be shared publicly. In particular, do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their knowledge or permission. This does not include photos from the Great Hearts Digital Collections and Archives or photos in which individuals are not clearly recognizable. Keep in mind that for reasons of privacy or security some students may not want it publicly known that they attend Great Hearts. Never share Social Security numbers, addresses or other private information. Remember that whatever you share may be public for an indefinite period of time, even if you attempt to modify or delete it.

## **Responsibility**

Use of social media on an official Great Hearts channel must be managed responsibly because it reflects on Great Hearts, its faculty, students, parents, alumni, and its employees.

- **Emergencies and Crisis Situations:** In the event of an emergency or crisis situation, managers of official Great Hearts accounts are asked to share only official information provided by the main Great Hearts social media accounts and shared in official Great Hearts messages. Sharing information found online or not approved by Great Hearts may lead to false or confusing information reaching the community and spreading online. Official accounts are also asked to delete or postpone any previously scheduled tweets or posts during an emergency or crisis situation.
- **HIPAA/FERPA Violation:** Social media account managers should take steps in advance to prevent the exposure of confidential medical or student information. Confidential information should never be posted online. Photos should also be inspected closely before publication to make sure no confidential, personal information, such as Social Security numbers, addresses, or academic records, can be seen. Never publish a name or photo without that individual's permission.
- **Other Users:** Other users, including student groups at Great Hearts, may have different interests, attitudes and opinions than official Great Hearts social media accounts. Before retweeting or sharing content posted by others on official Great Hearts channels, be careful that such content is accurate and reflects the Great Hearts's position.
- **Fake Accounts:** Employees should never create fake social media accounts (i.e., an account that seems to be the work of a third party) or share false or misleading information through a Great Hearts account.
- **Correcting Information:** If you unintentionally post something online that is incorrect, correct it visibly and publicly as quickly as possible. Doing so will earn you respect in the online community.

## Transparency

To both protect the Great Hearts name and build trust with users, social media such as blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, etc. that are established on behalf of Great Hearts entities should be explicit regarding the nature of the relationship of such media to Great Hearts. Similarly, in keeping with Great Hearts' non-profit status, social media should not be used for any private business or financial transactions including revenue from advertising, nor should any staff with administrative responsibilities realize any personal monetary profit from Great Hearts-related social media. Social media may be used for fundraising as long as a transaction does not occur on the social media platform itself.

Content shared via official Great Hearts social media channels, as well as pages or accounts that these channels like or follow, should reflect the mission and values of Great Hearts. Official Great Hearts accounts should refrain from posting content and liking or following users or pages that reflect personal interests or that may be in conflict with Great Hearts' mission or values.

Official Great Hearts accounts should encourage engagement and interaction with and among followers; however, they should reserve the right to remove content that is spam, commercial, obscene, harassing or derogatory. If the social network allows for it in the "Bio" or "About" section, official accounts should post a disclaimer similar to this: "Third-party posts on this wall do not imply endorsement of that content by Great Hearts. We reserve the right to remove content that is spam, commercial, obscene, harassing, and/or derogatory."

## Use of the Great Hearts Name

In addition to meeting the requirements set forth in [the Guidelines on use of Great Hearts names and insignias/crests](#), there are unique challenges associated with using the Great Hearts name in social media, such as the potential need to abbreviate a program or entity name for a Twitter account.

- Use of the Great Hearts seal or wordmark as a profile photo on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media account is not allowed.
- Be as clear as possible when naming your social media accounts, while keeping in mind character limits. Avoid using acronyms that may not be universally recognized.

## Copyright

Great Hearts official accounts must follow the [Great Hearts Policy on Fair Use of Copyrighted Materials](#) when posting intellectual property, including photos and videos, online.

- Materials posted online should be your property, in the public domain, have a Creative Commons license, or fall under fair use. For all other instances, you should seek permission from the copyright holder.
- Photos from Great Hearts. Photo should only be posted with permission.
- Where possible, best practice is to include credit/attribution.
  - Due to character limitations and platform norms, credit is not necessary on Twitter or Instagram.
  - On Facebook and YouTube/Vimeo, Great Hearts Photo and the Great Hearts Digital Collections and Archives (DCA) ask that you include a credit.
- Please see the [Multi Media Production Guide](#) details on fair use and tips for locating royalty free music, and images and photographs that permit re-use with Creative Commons licenses.

## **Terms of Service**

Official social media accounts at Great Hearts must follow the Terms of Service set forth by the social media channels they are using.

(Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Vimeo)

## **Best Practices**

Great Hearts has created best practices and guidelines for the most popular social media platforms. Official channels should follow the best practices for each platform. In some cases, deviation from best practices is warranted, but failure to follow best practices to the detriment of the Great Hearts may result in, but not be limited to, exclusion from official Great Hearts social media lists or platforms, lack of promotion from the main Great Hearts channels, and possible deactivation or deletion of the offending account. Deactivation and deletion will be carried out by contacting and working with the school's communications director or the Headmaster.

## **Inactive Accounts**

Social media channels at Great Hearts must be continually updated and monitored. Accounts that have been inactive for more than one month may be subject to deactivation or deletion. Deactivation and deletion will be carried out by contacting and working with the school's communications director or the Headmaster.

## **Accessibility**

Great Hearts is committed to ensuring effective access to communications materials for all members of the Great Hearts community, including individuals with disabilities.

- Visually impaired individuals and those with other disabilities may confront significant barriers when accessing certain information through social media. Accordingly, individuals who maintain social media on behalf of the Great Hearts should take steps to reduce barriers to access for individuals with disabilities. For example, enabling screen reader compatibility, captioning and descriptive tags on images can help reduce barriers to accessing information for individuals with disabilities. Most major social media platforms (including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter) provide access solutions for individuals with disabilities, including application programming interfaces (API) that enable the creation of applications that enhance accessibility of content.
- It is important to keep in mind that APIs do not eliminate or resolve all accessibility challenges. For additional and more current resources on improving access to Great Hearts-related social media and Great Hearts websites for individuals with disabilities, please contact Great Hearts Digital Media Manager at: [srichards@greatheartsaz.org](mailto:srichards@greatheartsaz.org)

## **Personnel Recruitment**

While social media continues to evolve and develop as an effective tool for advertising jobs at the Great Hearts and for recruiting candidates, it does not replace or otherwise eliminate the need to use the existing recruitment systems and processes for posting positions, collecting applications, conducting background checks, making offers of employment and other related activities. Offers of employment should only be extended through existing and accepted processes, and should not be communicated through social media.