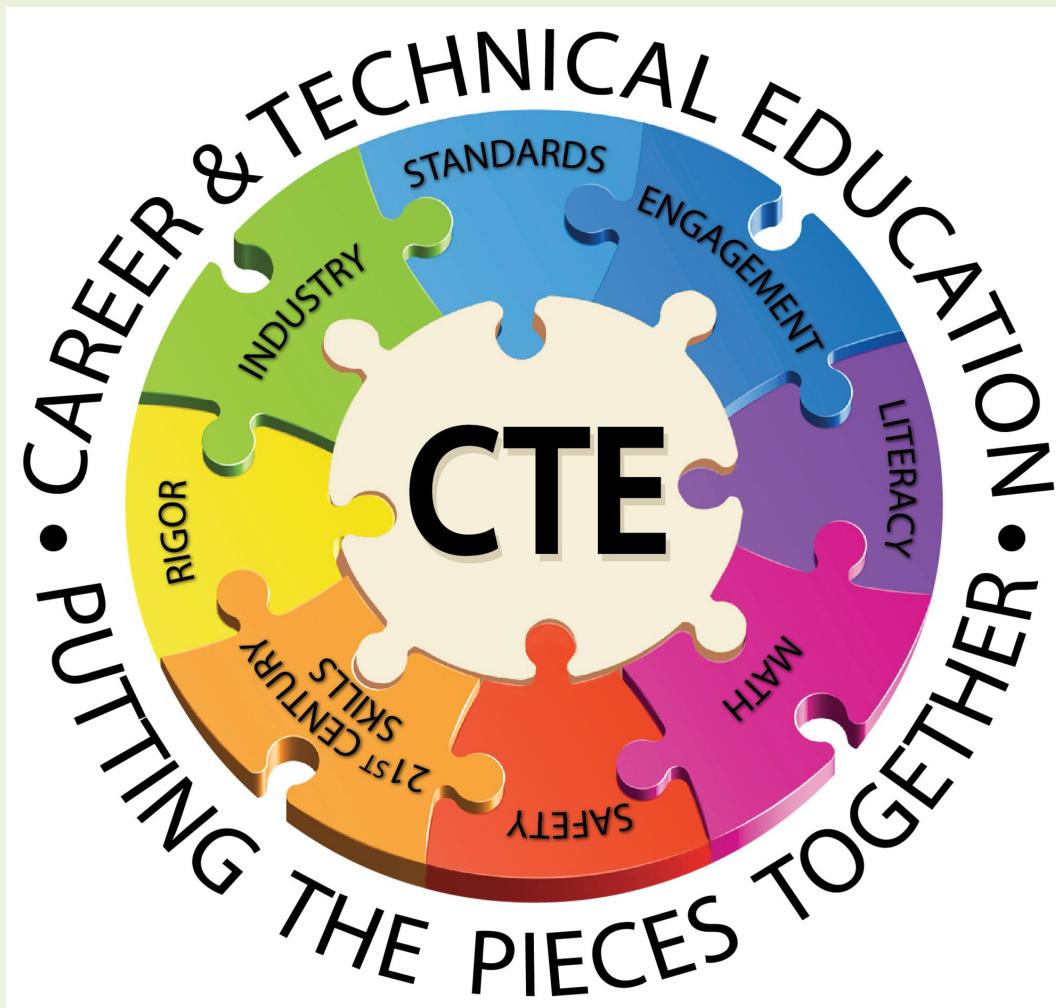


Social Media is a CTE Necessity



An Education Green Paper For CTE Directors, Principals, & Superintendents
By Rachel Mezzatesta & Mark Hewitt

Green Paper versus White Paper

The term *white paper* originated with the British government, and many point to the Churchill White Paper of 1922 as the earliest well-known example under this name.

White papers are a way the government can present policy preferences before it introduces legislation. Publishing a white paper tests public opinion on controversial policy issues and helps the government gauge its probable impact.

By contrast, green papers, which are issued much more frequently, are more open-ended. Also known as *consultation documents*, green papers may merely propose a strategy to implement in the details of other legislation, or they may set out proposals on which the government wishes to obtain public views and opinion.

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Why Read This Green Paper

The demand by your students, parents, business leaders and community to ensure that digital communications are safe, effortless and effective is complicated by the ever changing and accelerating speed of social media. As social media continues to evolve, how can your district keep pace?

In this green paper, get more insight into how school administrators and career and technical education leaders can embrace social media to improve student safety, employability, soft skills and college and career readiness. From an operations standpoint, this paper also outlines a proven method to decrease the amount of time required for and the accuracy of annual state CTE reporting.

Key questions addressed include:

- What is the role of social media in education?
- How can social media be employed to meet the needs of your intended audiences - students, parents, teachers, business leaders and community?
- How can schools effectively engage and employ social media to achieve results?
- How can CTE administrators and educators more effectively report state results?

Executive Summary

Social media education in school districts achieves three core outcomes, namely:

1. Improved student college and career readiness,
2. Enhanced student soft skills and employability, and
3. Professional development for teachers, staff and administrators.

Shaping social media communication skill sets and digital citizenship is a must do priority.

The challenges to building a program that balances engagement with efficacy include:

- Providing equal access to education opportunities for all,
- Maintaining currency of social media curriculum,
- Training district personnel to achieve needed scale,
- Justifying the investment based on budgets, and
- Demonstrating measurable outcomes.

Recommendations

- Incorporate a social media program that addresses state CTE competencies related to digital and business communications.
- Train-to-teach through professional development of the CTE staff.
- Involve administration, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Principal, Vice Principals, CTE Director and CTE teachers to lead by example.
- Leverage a social media program in CTE to define and report on measurable outcomes.

Insights | Take Aways

- Social media has disrupted communications and requires a disciplined approach in school districts.
- The pace of innovation will lead to more personalized interactions and responsible social media usage is key to student college and career readiness.
- Digital transformation in school districts may be thought of as the third stage of embracing digital technologies: digital competence → digital literacy→ digital transformation.



History of The Perkins Act and College & Career Readiness Context

The ability to establish and manage one's online personal brand and employ social media communication skills is essential in today's connected economy. Fortunately, the federal government created the Perkins Act in the 1970s to support vocational and technical education needs.

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest." Benjamin Franklin

History of The Perkins Act

Congressional Representative Carl D. Perkins (D-Kentucky), wanted students to be better prepared for the work world. The original Perkins Act provided federal funds for vocational programs for both youth and adults. The derivative Federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act (Perkins IV / CTEA) provides funds to postsecondary institutions, preparing students to be more competitive in the world economy.

(Source: NYSED.gov)

The Relevance of Social Media in CTE

Whether a student is on a college preparatory or vocational/occupational track, career readiness is paramount. As a core communication competency in our digital world, social media proficiency represents a needed skill to be effective in managing one's career.

In addition to the many areas of CTE in which knowledge of social media best practices is a necessity, a social media program is also relevant to the following:

- Guidance departments
- Business & entrepreneurship classes
- Alumni associations
- Professional development for administrators and teachers

Putting people and human interaction at the center of day-to-day activities is more important than ever before. Relationship building, online communication, collaboration, and cultivating influence are fast becoming core and required skill sets to succeed in today's connected economy. Proper social media usage is the key.

School districts must embrace new strategies and approaches to anticipate and respond to the rapid shifts in the world. Innovative educators will engage with the district and school leadership to shape the student and instructor experience and move the school district forward. And, as the millennial generation enters the workforce and continues to change personnel dynamics, there will be a stronger focus on transparency, relevance and engagement.

Digital Citizenship

Inherent in being a good digital citizen is acting ethically in social media interactions and having a healthy and safe experience.

Digital Citizenship Definitions

- A person who develops the skills and knowledge to effectively use the Internet and other digital technology, especially in order to participate responsibly in social and civic activities. (Dictionary.com)
- A digital citizen refers to a person utilizing information technology (IT) in order to engage in society, politics, and government participation. In qualifying as a digital citizen, a person generally must have extensive skills and knowledge in using the Internet through computers, mobile phones, and web-ready devices to interact with private and public organizations. (Wikipedia)
- Digital citizenship is the norms of appropriate, responsible technology use. Too often we are seeing students as well as adults misusing and abusing technology but not sure what to do. The issue is more than what the users do not know but what is considered appropriate technology usage. (Digital Citizenship)

The 9 Elements of Digital Citizenship (Respect, Educate, Protect)

- **Respect Yourself/Respect Others**
 1. **Etiquette:** *electronic standards of conduct or procedure.*
 2. **Access:** *full electronic participation in society.*
 3. **Law:** *electronic responsibility for actions and deeds.*

- **Educate Yourself/Connect with Others**

4. **Literacy:** *process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology.*
5. **Communication:** *electronic exchange of information.*
6. **Commerce:** *electronic buying and selling of goods.*

- **Protect Yourself/Protect Others**

7. **Rights and Responsibility:** *those freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world.*
8. **Safety (Security):** *electronic precautions to guarantee safety.*
9. **Health and Welfare:** *physical and psychological well being in a digital technology world.*

Demonstrating sound judgment in digital communications assists students to be capable brand stewards both in academia and beyond. School sponsorship of a social media curriculum creates differentiation for both the student and district.

Getting Started with a Social Media Curriculum in School Districts

School leadership must first create a strategy to ensure social media program success.

The seven key elements of a social media strategy (the framework) are:

1. **Goal(s):** What does success look like? What are you trying to achieve? (Why)
2. **Audience:** For whom? Who will benefit? (Who)
3. **Message/brand:** What are you trying to convey? (What)
4. **Owner(s):** Who is responsible to lead and manage the program? (Who)

5. **Location:** In which schools and classes will you provide the program? In which channels will you focus? (Where)
6. **Process:** What is the operational plan? How will you report and evaluate progress, and make changes? (How)
7. **Measurement/KPIs & Metrics:** How will you measure results? Over time? (What/When)

As it relates to a CTE social media program, a sample strategy may include the following elements:

1. **Goal(s):**
 - a. Employ a social media program to assist college or career-bound CTE students to become more competitive as they enter today's connected economy.
 - b. Attract new enrollment in CTE (annual increase of 20%).
 - c. Retain current students enrolled in CTE classes.
 - d. Raise awareness with parents, business leaders and the community at large.
 - e. Foster engagement with the CTE program (for example, business internships).
 - f. Improve efficiency and accuracy of state reporting.
2. **Audience:** Students, parents, administrators, teachers, business leaders, community, state.
3. **Message/brand:** Social media will differentiate you from your peers and enhance your college/career readiness.
4. **Owner(s):** CTE or Assistant CTE Director, CTE educators
5. **Location:** School 1 & 2 (pilot year 1) and CTE classrooms; LinkedIn

6. **Process:** License or develop a curriculum and train internally to develop teacher social media competency.

7. **Measurement/KPIs & Metrics:**

a. **3 Sample KPIs:** Increase CTE Student Enrollment, Retain Current CTE Students, Decrease Time and Increase Accuracy of State Reporting

b. **Sample Metrics:** Year 1 Introduction to Social Media CTE class sign ups of X; Year 2 increase of Y% in CTE sign ups, CTE Student Retention of Z, Decrease in CTE Instructor Reporting Time of XX hours, Increase in Accuracy of Reported Data (YY%)

As the social media program is established and employed in CTE, be sure to include school leadership - the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Principal, Vice Principals, CTE Director and CTE teachers - to demonstrate engagement, create excitement and lead by example.

To efficiently capture student outcomes, high schools are now set up with an alumni association. Through your social media curriculum and instruction, ensure students add their secondary school to their LinkedIn profile in the education section and complete the parameters associated with CTE field of study, pathway, and coursework to enable measurement of results post graduation for state reporting.

Summary

Employing a social media program in CTE provides today's students with a differentiator. Not only will they be better prepared for college and career pathways, but a social media program will provide experiences and exposures that result in improved critical thinking and judgment. Social media underlines the importance of maintaining skill set currency and ignites the

importance of perpetual education and personal brand stewardship in today's competitive work environment.

Recommendations

- Incorporate a social media curriculum that addresses state CTE competencies related to digital and business communications.
- Train-to-teach through professional development of the CTE staff.
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- Leverage a social media program in CTE to define and report on measurable outcomes.

Closing Thoughts

- Social media has disrupted communications and requires a disciplined approach in school districts.
- The pace of innovation will lead to more personalized interactions and responsible social media usage is key to student college and career readiness.
- Digital transformation in school districts may be thought of as the third stage of embracing digital technologies: digital competence → digital literacy→ digital transformation.

Authors



Rachel Mezzatesta – CEO

Rachel has worked in the digital space for over 20 years. Speaking with clients about the impact of digital disruption on their organizations, Rachel began to research and study the evolving best practices for school districts and enterprises as it relates to social media.

Prior to joining Socially Savvy, Rachel worked in a number of leadership, operations and marketing roles at firms such as Advanced Sales & Marketing, EBSCO Publishing and MilitaryJobTransition.com. Rachel is a graduate of Florida State University and an avid Seminoles fan.



Mark Hewitt – President

Mark has a passion for social business, organizational transformation and all things digital. Witnessing the impact social media can have on individual brands and their potential for advocacy and influence on organizations, Mark felt compelled to found Socially Savvy.

Mark worked in various direct sales and sales management capacities at companies including EQengineered, Forrester Research, Cantina Consulting, and Isobar | Molecular. Mark is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and served in the US Army.