

Rhode Island Southeastern Massachusetts Football and Spirit Conference (RISMA)

I. Social Media Guidelines

A. Purpose Statement

RISMA is dedicated to fostering a community of stakeholders that supports the mission and purpose of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. In order to accomplish this, we realize the importance of communicating using social media channels. Because the lines between personal voice and Conference and Association voice are often blurred, RISMA has crafted the following guidelines, which have been adopted by our member Associations, to help clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media.

All RISMA Board Members, Association Board Members, Coaches, Parents and Participants are expected to follow the same behavioral standards as outlined by Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. when interacting online, failure to do so may result in disciplinary action consistent with RISMA and Pop Warner rules.

B. Definitions

Social Media is defined as media designed to communicate online through social interaction using highly accessible public publishing forums such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, blogs, message boards, and other social platforms.

Personal Site is defined as a social media site that is for the sole purpose of personal use. There are no identifications of the person as a representative of RISMA or one of RISMA's member Associations (or their coaches) and content is restricted to personal and not team or Association-related material. The guidelines in this document are not intended to regulate personal sites, but personal sites are subject to the conduct rules mandated by Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.

Public Site is defined as a social media site where a person represents RISMA, a member Association, or a member Association's Team or booster organization. This includes personally branded sites, for example a coach's or team parent's blog.

II. General Guiding Principles

A. Conference/Association Ownership

Any social media account considered a Public Site representing the interests of RISMA, an Association, Team or Booster Organization, must be registered with the respective Association and the RISMA Web Master. Permission to start a public account must be obtained from the Association President (or for a Conference-wide site, by the RISMA Web Master).

B. Disclosure and Personal Responsibility

Account managers administering sites on behalf of an Association or Team must post a disclosure on their "profile" or "home page" indicating their position on the staff. If more than one staffer posts on the

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site, this must be indicated in the disclosure.

III. Specific Guidelines

A. Proprietary Information and Confidentiality

All photos, podcasts, videos, news stories or other information not authored by an account manager should be used only in compliance with copyright laws, and therefore with the permission of the author.

Account managers will not comment on confidential information related to Conference or Association matters that may include litigation, personnel matters, including the status of coaches or staff members, competition scoring or judging decisions, or other confidential information about finances or athletes.

B. Accuracy and Clarity

Don't link to an external site promoting a product or service that is not affiliated with your Association, RISMA, or Pop Warner without the permission of your Association President or the RISMA Web Master, as the case may be.

Be careful of using jargon that only a handful of posters understand. Try to use inclusive language.

Make sure your facts (times, dates, names) are correct and are spelled correctly. Don't speculate.

C. Disclosure

Do not post information about specific athletes, without permission. Please follow the guidelines of good taste.

D. Sportsmanship

Don't talk about internal Association matters, RISMA (or other Conference), or Pop Warner. Practice generosity. Find something good to say, or don't say it. Don't bash the competition. Politics and religion are off limits. Don't gender bash. Common sense and courtesy should always prevail.

E. Disclaimers and Posting Guidelines

Each social media account manager must post their identity along with their staff position in their profile and identify themselves as the account manager.

The following posting guidelines will be posted in the profile information on all social media accounts: "We invite you to become a part of the community here and post or comment on a regular basis. RISMA and <Association Name> are dedicated to building a safe and secure community online. We ask that you not use graphic language, post offensive images, or use language that is derogatory to specific people. Any comments or posts that violate these posting guidelines will be removed by the account manager."

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F. Respect in the Social Media Space

Posting is speaking in public. Don't post anything you wouldn't say at a public meeting representing RISMA, your Association, or Team.

Be careful not to engage with posters who are commenting on matters related to Pop Warner, RISMA, or your Associations reputation. Please alert the RISMA Web Master if this is a concern.

Don't pick fights and don't engage in them

Answer legitimate questions – don't use a question as a forum for your opinion

Respect people's opinions. There are circumstances in which it may be necessary to the limit access of a poster or delete a post – use the posting guidelines as a guideline if you need to delete a post. If you are in doubt, contact the RISMA Web Master. Please make a hard copy of the questionable post with name of the poster and text before you delete it.

If you maintain a Twitter account, please check your followers regularly for Twitter porn and block those followers. Their profiles and avatars are available to anyone who looks at your page.

G. Security

Do not give out the phone numbers, addresses or other personal information of yourself, other staffers or athletes on a social media site without express written permission.

H. Crisis Communications/Emergencies

If there is an emergency or crisis involving your Team or Association, social media outlets may be one of the most efficient ways to distribute accurate information quickly. You may be given information to disseminate by your Association President and should not post any other information to avoid confusion on issues of critical importance to your Association, RISMA, and Pop Warner.

I. Don't Forget Your Day Job

You should make sure that all online activities do not interfere with your job or work commitments.

J. Branding

Please be careful to use only the approved Pop Warner, RISMA, and Association logos and colors.

IV. Procedures

Each social media account that is maintained must be registered with your Association and with RISMA.

Each person that manages a social media account on behalf of an Association must meet with their Association President to discuss proper use of the social media account under the standards set by the Association.

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V. Disciplinary Procedures

A. Failure to follow these guidelines is a violation of RISMA and individual Association policies and subject to discipline and/or removal of the account manager from participation.