SEA/LEA Social Media Use Inquiry
January 7, 2013

About This Inquiry:

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is committed to helping States better understand the current state of affairs regarding the use of social media in state and local education arenas. The Reform Support Network (RSN) Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Community of Practice (SCE CoP) is collecting data from some SEAs and LEAs to inform the field and improve assistance that is provided to States as they develop and implement new social media policies and initiatives to inform and engage stakeholders.

This questionnaire is part of a research inquiry being conducted by the Reform Support Network to examine current social media usage, challenges, and best practices in state education agencies and large local education agencies. The key topics covered in this questionnaire are: social media platforms and usage, social media policies and plans, social media metrics and reporting and social media challenges. The findings of this research will be used to help inform state education agencies wishing to expand or make more impactful social media efforts with a variety of options and best practices. Specifically, the results of this inquiry will be used to inform ongoing and targeted technical assistance provided by the RSN to States, as well as for the development of additional publications/webinars on social media use. No identifying information will be reported in a way that allows for identification of individual Agency responses. All data will be reported in the aggregate and any comparisons will only be made between SEA/LEA.

The inquiry form is expected to take a maximum of 15 minutes to complete. Please take a few moments to provide information on the status of your agency's social media policies, use, vehicles and successes/challenges. A few open-ended questions are included if you are willing to dive more deeply into this topic and to indicate your interest in providing additional information about best practices and challenges in social media use.

Social Media Platforms and Usage

1. Are you answering on behalf of a state or local education agency?
   - State education agency
   - Local education agency

2. Which of the following social media tools does your Agency currently use or plan to use?
   (*Matrix with "Currently use" or "Plan to use" and "Do not plan to use"*)
   - Twitter
   - Facebook
   - LinkedIn
   - YouTube

- Google+
- RSS
- Blog
- Other (please specify)

3. Who are your key audiences for each of the following platforms? (*Matrix of platforms x audience)*
   - Parents
   - Local educators
   - Local administrators
   - SEA employees
   - Elected and appointed officials
   - The media
   - The general public

4. How often does your Agency typically use each of the following platforms to communicate with stakeholders? *(Matrix of platforms x frequency)*
   - Not applicable
   - Multiple times a day
   - Once a day
   - A few times per week
   - A few times per month
   - A few times per year
   - Not sure

5. To what extent does your Agency use social media for the following purposes? *(Scale of 1 to 4, extent. 4=To great extent, 3= To moderate extent, 2=To limited extent, 1=Not at all, N/A=Not applicable)*
   - Share information and resources with educators
   - Create and sustain professional learning communities
   - Improve state-wide communications
   - Issues management
   - Crisis response
   - Enhance collaboration on initiatives and projects
   - Connect directly with parents
   - Engage the local community
   - Advertise job postings and career opportunities

6. Indicate other primary purposes for your Agency's social media usage that are not listed above. (*Short answer)*

Social Media Policies and Plans

7. Does your Agency have formal social media guidelines or policies for professional Agency staff? *(Yes/No/I don't know.)*

8. If yes, in which areas does your Agency have official policies and guidelines? (select all that apply)
   - Determining appropriate content to post on social media
   - Triaging and responding to posts
   - Content management and controls
   - Archiving social media postings
   - Measuring and monitoring social media impact
   - Privacy issues
   - Ethical issues
   - Legal issues
   - Other (please specify)

9. Does your Agency have a process for approving content before it is posted on social media? (*Yes/No/I don't know.*)

10. Does your Agency have a formal strategic communications plan for social media? *(Yes/No/I don't know.)*

11. Does your Agency have a designated person responsible for social media? *(Yes/No/I don't know.)*

12. If yes, what is the title of this person? (*Short answer*)

13. If yes, what percentage of that person's time is generally spent on social media?
    - Up to 25%
    - Up to 50%
    - Up to 75%
    - Up to 100%

14. Does your Agency restrict social media access for employees with firewalls or other technology? (*Yes/No/I don't know.)*

Social Media Metrics and Reporting

15. How successful would you rate your Agency's use of social media? (*Scale of 1 to 5, success. 5=Very successful, 4=Successful, 3=Neither, 2=Unsuccessful, 1=Very unsuccessful)*

16. On what evidence is your rating based? (*Short answer*)

17. How quantitative or qualitative is the evaluation of your Agency's success in its social media efforts?
    - *Mostly qualitative*
    - *Equally qualitative and quantitative*
    - *Mostly quantitative*

18. Does your Agency create or receive reports containing summary information and metrics from social media? *(Yes/No)*

19. Which of the following social media metrics are analyzed? (*Select all that apply.)*
    - Level of engagement
    - Audience reach
    - Influence
    - Mentions by other social media users
    - Referral traffic
    - Other

20. How is this information used? (*Short answer*)

Social Media Challenges

21. To what degree have the following issues been a challenge to implementing or utilizing social media at your Agency? *(Scale of 1 to 4, degree. 4=To a great degree, 3= To a moderate degree, 2=To a limited degree, 1= Not at all))*
    - Concerns about negative postings by the public or critics
    - Lack of clarity about who is responsible for social media initiatives
    - Lack of commitment by decision makers
    - Staffing
    - Lack of staff expertise
    - Lack of training and resources
    - Privacy concerns
    - Legal concerns

22. Briefly note other significant challenges that your Agency faced in implementing and utilizing social media.

Miscellaneous

23. For the following statements, indicate your level of agreement (*Scale of 1 to 5, agreement. 5= Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree*):
    - Social media has great potential for helping our Agency achieve its communication goals.
    - There is strong institutional support for social media in our Agency.

- There is strong buy-in for social media usage in our Agency.
- Expertise to help our social media efforts is readily available.
- Our Agency has not figured out how to use social media effectively but is eager to learn.
- An internal champion is essential to the successful implementation of social media.

24. The Reform Support Network would like to collect more advanced information about current social media use. Is your Agency willing to participate in a brief follow up? *(Yes/No)*

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1800-0011. Note: Please do not return the completed Customer Feedback Form to this address.