

# SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE GUIDELINES



[www.aquestt.com](http://www.aquestt.com)

[www.education.ne.gov/essa](http://www.education.ne.gov/essa)

[nep.education.ne.gov](http://nep.education.ne.gov)

Public comments may vary in intensity and tone. Decide beforehand what your policy will be for replying and who should be involved in crafting responses. Regarding the announcement of your school's AQuESTT classification, you may find the draft materials included in a separate document, including talking points and suggested communications to parents, to be helpful.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- You don't need to respond to every public comment but replying with a short "Thank you!" can help build good will and reassure people that you are interested in their feedback.
- Try to reply as soon as possible, especially to negative or heated comments.
- Assign someone to monitor public comments on evenings and weekends.
- Public comments made after hours, on weekends or holidays can be responded to on the next business day, unless an immediate response is deemed necessary by your social media team.
- As public comments are monitored, a response may be deemed necessary if the comment:
  - Contains misinformation
  - Misrepresents key facts
  - Contains a legitimate question or desire for more information
  - Generates multiple posts
  - Expresses appreciation for your organization
  - Contains a question for you
  - Contains hate speech, invective or is threatening.
- In general, keep replies short, polite and direct people to where to find more information. Do not engage in endless back-and-forth.
- In general, try to avoid blocking, banning or unfollowing people.



## FACEBOOK

There are several actions you can take on Facebook in response to public comments. You can:

1. Publicly respond to the comment.
2. Hide the comment. This hides the comment from everyone except the poster and his or her friends, who remain unaware that it was hidden. Other visitors to your page do not see the comment.
3. Delete the comment. The original poster will be aware of this if they try to view the comment; however they won't be notified.
4. Ban the original poster. When the decision is made to ban someone, they can still share content from your Facebook page, but they can no longer publish comments on your page, like a post on your page or message your page. (To ban someone, click "hide" and you will see the option to ban.)
5. Report the original poster.





## TWITTER

On Twitter, you cannot control public replies. Your options are to reply, or in extreme cases, you can unfollow, block, mute and report.

- **Reply.** Follow the same guidelines here. Reply once, keep it short, polite and direct people to where they can get more information or how to follow up.
- **Blocking.** Accounts you have blocked cannot follow you, and you cannot follow them. They will not be able to view your Tweets, following or followers lists, or likes, and you will not receive notifications of mentions directly from those accounts. You'll also stop seeing their Tweets in your timeline.
- Blocked accounts do not receive a notification alerting them that their account has been blocked. However, if a blocked account visits the profile of an account that has blocked them, they will see they have been blocked (unlike mute, which is invisible to muted accounts).
- **Muting.** Mute is a feature that allows you to remove an account's Tweets from your timeline without unfollowing or blocking that account. Muted accounts will not know that you've muted them, and you can unmute them at any time.



## ON INSTAGRAM

On Instagram you can block people and delete comments.

## DELETING COMMENTS (Instagram and Facebook only)

Staff should always check with a designated member of your team first before deleting a user's comment.

- If the decision is made to delete a comment, you should acknowledge the deletion with a comment such as:
  - “We've removed comments that we felt were offensive or inappropriately confrontational. Please be sure to only include comments that are respectful of all users in order to make sure this is a safe and meaningful place for everyone. Feel free to repost your comments with appropriate edits made. Repeated posts of inappropriate content may result in a user being blocked and/or reported.”
- Before deleting a comment, take a screenshot.

## CRAFTING THE RESPONSE

Consider who is commenting. Is this person a parent? Or a public figure (for instance, an elected official)? Adjust your reply accordingly.

The ideal response/comment would include:

- Key messages that answer or address the initial comment, link to your website, and encourage the commenter to learn more or get involved.
- The post should be conversational, positive and short.
- Don't engage in endless back-and-forth. One reply should generally be sufficient. After that, direct the person to follow up with you via email or phone.
  - “Thank you for your comment. We encourage you to read more about what this decision means for your child [or our school] here: [URL]. Feel free to contact NAME at [email] for more information.”

