Marketing the Library: Dos and Don’ts for Using Facebook and Blogs

Compiled by Meredith Moore – mercolleen@gmail.com


■ **DO get permission to use student photos.** In Cranston, all students must complete and submit a form that covers several items, including the acceptable use policy and a media release. I work with my school secretaries to compile a list of students who cannot be photographed. If a form isn’t submitted, I count that student as a “no.” I also avoid connecting photos and names just to be on the safe side … if a child is holding up work with his or her name on it, I erase the name in Paint before posting the photo.

■ **DO let your administrator know your plan.** Social media has become an accepted way to reach a school audience, but give your administrator the courtesy of a heads-up. Some people are still leery of Facebook, so you may receive some pushback, but you can be prepared with links to established pages and a description of the content you plan to include.

■ **DO publicize your online presence via print.** At the beginning of the year, I put together a newsletter that goes home; it promotes the library, upcoming events (like the RI Festival of Children’s Books and Authors), and the blog/Facebook page. I also leave little flyers out on the tables on nights when there is a parent group meeting, highlighting recent posts.

■ **DON’T use your blog or Facebook page as a platform to make statements.** You may be tempted to repost articles on controversial topics like PARCC testing opt-outs … don’t do it! Keep your focus positive; the purpose of promoting the activities in your library is to demonstrate your value to the school community. Keep your personal opinions to your personal pages.

■ **DON’T be discouraged by low hit counts.** Within the past year, Facebook changed the way it distributes posts … the site only shows a fraction of your followers any one item (although if someone likes a post or comments on it, it will show it to a few more). But even if you’re only reaching a small number of your school’s families, you’re still making connections that can translate into volunteers or donations. In addition, you’re showcasing what you do all day – very valuable when it comes to evaluation time! And remember that you can share lesson ideas by tweeting blog posts to your PLN.