

## CREATING YOUR SCHOOL WEBSITE

# *COMMUNICATE WITH PURPOSE*

by

PJ Caposey, Principal, Oregon High School

The point of having a school website (administrator level) or a classroom website (teacher level) is to communicate--on your terms-- with as many stakeholders as possible.

Some districts and schools have the ability to provide their staffs with easy to use web pages for their materials. At Oregon Community Unit School District 220 ([www.OCUSD.net](http://www.OCUSD.net)), we use EdLine, a vendor that helps to maintain our site and provides training on how to use the site best for our benefit. For our faculty and staff, it is very easy to post assignments, due-dates, etc. online in an easily digestible format.

The problem with a school website or webpage like [mine](#) is that not many kids, when they get home, are excited to visit their school's webpage. Also, as much as we would like to think the parents are excited to visit our webpage, the process is just another of the 125 things parents need to do after they get home from work.

The point of establishing a website, webpage, blog, or online content is to communicate on your terms with the people with whom you want to communicate. In order to do so effectively, an educator should make conscious decisions on how to maximize his/her efforts regarding communication and react appropriately. At the classroom level, I would give a survey: How many students Fbook, Tweet, Google, blog, and/or wiki, etc.? Find out what your kids currently do, and try to accommodate their needs. Meanwhile, push to the next phase of technology.

At OHS, Facebook is current, but Twitter is gaining popularity. On Facebook we have an OHS community service and [college opportunities](#) (scholarships, visiting schools, etc.). I have made a conscious decision to push Twitter in any means possible to our students, parents, and public this year. Why? Twitter allows me to communicate in the method I prefer. It is quick and easy for me. It also allows me to seamlessly require parents and students to visit our website through hotlinks.

As you begin to explore using technology to assist you in communication with your students, parents, and community members, remember to communicate on your terms, but in the media forms they are currently choosing. You are then able to efficiently link your stakeholders to the information that you would like them to have in the format most accessible to them.