

Contents

Preface	xiii
INTRODUCTION	
The Power of Social Media	1
I Have A <i>Real</i> Job to Do.....	2
Not My Thing, Not My Job.....	3
Rising from the Ashes.....	3
Burned Out and Drifting	7
Sunshine, Rainbows, and Lollipops	8
PART ONE	
Set Yourself up for Success	11
CHAPTER 1	
Know Your Audience	13
Students.....	15
Parents.....	16
Faculty.....	17
Community Members.....	17
Other Educators.....	18
CHAPTER 2	
Secure Buy-In from Administrators and Parents.....	19
Winning Hearts and Minds.....	20
Be Informed	22
Model, Model, Model.....	24
Soothing Parents' Frazzled Nerves.....	26
CHAPTER 3	
Teach Digital Citizenship Using Social Media	29
Modeling Positive Social Media Use.....	30
School Librarians Leading Change	33
Ideas for Using Social Media to Teach Digital Citizenship.....	37
Aren't "Canned" Online Digital Citizenship Sessions Worthwhile?	39

CHAPTER 4	
Anonymity and Social Media	41
Social Media Is Not a Mask	42
Yik Yak and Other Anonymous Apps	42
SnapChat	43
Twitter and Facebook	44
Social Media Displays	46
PART TWO	
Harness the Power of Social Media Tools for Learning	51
CHAPTER 5	
Blogs and Digital Portfolios	53
Student Digital Portfolios	54
What Should Go in a Digital Portfolio	55
Digital Portfolio Building Tools	58
Teacher Digital Portfolios	60
CHAPTER 6	
The Magic of Hashtags	63
Facebook Hashtags	64
Instagram Hashtags	65
Twitter	68
CHAPTER 7	
Video and Social Media	73
Video Resources	74
Live Interactive Video Tools	76
Live Interactive Video Ideas	81
Instagram and SnapChat Video Tools	82
Blocking of Video Sites and Apps	83
CHAPTER 8	
Books and Social Media	85
Book Clubs	86
Fan Fiction	88

The Power of (Self-)Publishing.....	91
CHAPTER 9	
Social Media Managers.....	95
Twitter Chats.....	96
Organizing Resources.....	101
Posting to Multiple Sites	106
You Must Never Sleep	108
PART THREE	
Stay Connected.....	109
CHAPTER 10	
Connected Librarians.....	111
Isolated Much?.....	112
Finding Your People.....	112
Connected Librarians = Connected Students	116
CHAPTER 11	
Keeping up with Trends.....	119
Augmented Reality	120
Virtual Reality.....	122
Mixed Reality	125
Conclusion.....	128
References	129
APPENDIX A	
ISTE Standards.....	133
ISTE Standards for Students.....	135
ISTE Standards for Educators	137

INTRODUCTION

The Power of Social Media

Remember playing word association games? One person says a word or phrase, and the other person states the first word that comes to their mind. Let's play that game now, but let's stick to the subject of education. If I say, "social media," what is the first word that pops into your mind? Did you think of any words like those below?

Distraction	Blocked
Silliness	Sexting
Juvenile	Bullying
Inappropriate	Digital citizenship

Or, does your mind take you to words like these?

Connecting	Access
Learning	Growth
Sharing	Knowledge
Real-world connections	

What we think about social media in schools is influenced by our own experiences with the education system; our values—and even our biases—are reflected in our assessments of school programs. If the first set of words resonated the loudest with you, I hope the contents of this book will do more than merely change these word associations for you; I hope they will assist you in convincing others in your district that social media is a valuable, powerful educational tool for students and staff.

I Have a *Real* Job to Do

School librarians' roles have changed drastically, especially within the last ten years, as the influx of technology has worked its way into our school systems. Once viewed as the guardians, organizers, lenders, and recommenders of books and other resources—magically appearing from the stacks or the elusive “back office”—school librarians today are thought and technology leaders. It is important that, as leaders, we have a solid understanding of social media, maintain our own personal and professional online presences, and help educators, administrators, students, and parents use social media to both enhance professional development and empower student learning.

Unfortunately, there are still many among us who have failed to see the ways that social media can pique the personal genius in both our teachers and our students, inspiring new projects and ways of engaging with content and one another. At a recent school library conference, I was taking Snapchat selfies with attendees to show off the app's new geolocation filters. You can use these filters to help promote and engage students in special events at your school or library. Upon seeing this, one attendee commented, “I don't have time for social media. I have a real job to do.”

Instead of feeling angry or insulted, I actually understood where that comment was coming from. I had been in the same frame of mind not so many years ago. Librarians are stretched thin and social media can seem like yet another chore. In reality, social media is the perfect companion tool for a great many things we already do in our school libraries.

Not My Thing, Not My Job.

In this era of shrinking budgets, school libraries are increasingly on the chopping block with reduced hours, clerks replacing certified librarians, and even permanent closure. The crowd-sourced Google map, A Nation without School Libraries ([goo.gl/jv4PbF](https://www.google.com/maps/@37.563121,-122.324509,15z)), began to document cuts to school libraries in one form or another beginning in 2010; the map has unfortunately continued to grow each year since.

One of the most effective ways school librarians can stem the tide of cuts and ensure our libraries stay intact is by telling the stories of how the library positively impacts student learning and enhances teacher instruction. Social media provides the perfect platform for sharing these stories beyond passing conversations in the hallway or teachers' lounge, where they can reach a larger audience that includes parents, community members, and legislators who ultimately control the flow of funding to schools and school libraries. Telling the stories of our school libraries isn't bragging—it's a celebration of the learning that is taking place in our schools. The stories are proof that an active, appropriately funded library with a certified school librarian is vital to our school communities.

Rising from the Ashes

Much like the conference attendee I referenced earlier, the power of social media wasn't initially obvious to me. In the mid-2000s, I attended a state library conference session about getting connected with Twitter. I sat, listened, opened up a Twitter account, and then did nothing with it for over a year. I wondered what all the fuss was about. I had a Twitter account, yet nothing had changed. I concluded that Twitter just must not be my "thing."

Then, a strange combination of circumstance, curiosity, and timing changed my mind about social media, and especially Twitter. Through the 2008–10 school years, I began noticing odd-looking squares on the periodicals routinely ordered for the school library. I noticed them on pages featuring advertisements, but also on signs in stores, at bus stops, and anywhere advertisements were placed. My curiosity got the better of me one day and I did a little research to find out what the squares were, and why they were now appearing in the majority of our school library periodicals. It didn't take long to discover that the odd squares were called QR codes, and that businesses were using them to attract potential purchasers by offering an interactive experience.

This made sense to me. Advertising companies are always competing for attention from a fast-moving, short-attention-spanned demographic; finding ways to capture and hold their customers' attention means the difference between those customers not only remembering the product, but associating it with positive feelings.

What didn't occur to me, and what now feels like one of my bigger “duh” moments, was that I had been working with a fast-moving, short-attention-spanned demographic since 1992, when I first became an educator! Other educators had put these thoughts together and, by the time I had first started researching QR codes, had already begun using them to captivate young minds, enhance instruction, and engage student learning. My feelings of joy were soon overtaken by anger and resentment toward the school district I worked for.

I am ashamed to admit that, from the early 90s until the early 2000s, I had been “that” educator—the one who passively waited for the school or district to provide professional learning. Even worse, I was the one who attended conferences to ensure I had enough professional development hours to keep my teaching

certification up to date, yet I often dismissed the presenters, almost priding myself on my uncanny ability to pick apart their presentations. When I discovered other educators across the country knew about QR codes and had been using them to successfully engage students in learning, I was resentful because no one at my school, district, or any conferences I had attended had ever even mentioned QR codes, much less how they could be used in an educational setting.

The audacity that no one had introduced me to QR codes propelled me to find out why certain districts had provided timely and useful professional development for their educators, while others had not. What I discovered resulted in a landslide of positive change and opened my eyes to the power of social media.

The first thing I discovered in my search was that I had been asking the wrong question. It wasn't the school districts that had provided information about QR codes. These educators had learned about QR codes on their own or through other educators who were interested in how QR codes could be used to entice students to pay attention and learn. Again, the ability to put two and two together didn't immediately click, and I discovered sometime later that the key to all of this was community; these educators were willing to connect, share, learn, and grow—together.

I began my search for more relevant professional learning online. Almost immediately, I came across websites offering astronomically expensive (and horribly dry) professional development opportunities for educators, but specialized online courses for school librarians were virtually impossible to find. I was beginning to feel defeated in my quest when I happened across a website called The 30 Goals Challenge for Educators (livebinders.com/play/play?id=442965&present=true), created by Shelly Terrell. The site was simple, easy to understand,

welcoming, and it was *free*! At first, I was worried that I had missed the start date for joining in the thirty challenges but was quickly reassured that the only requirement was to simply *try*. I wasn't required to do all the goals or start in any particular order. It was my choice to review the thirty goals presented and start in a place where I felt comfortable enough to step out of my comfort zone.

One of the first goals I chose was Goal 10: Make A Connection. This goal attracted my attention because it used Twitter, and I had an account that had been sitting there, mute and idle. I was also attracted to this goal because it reminded me of the teachers who had been using QR codes in their schools, classrooms, and libraries. Goal 10 introduced ways I could use various social media venues to make connections and showed me how, by doing this, I could build a Professional Learning Network (PLN). I soon learned about a new Twitter chat started by Shelly Terrell (@ShellTerrell), Jerry Blumengarten (@cybraryman1), and Tom Whitby (@tomwhitby) that used the hashtag #EdChat. I used this as my catalyst to work through Goal 10.

Tuesdays soon became my favorite day of the week as I anticipated participating in the #EdChat conversations. Never, in all my years as an educator, had I been part of such a stimulating, thought provoking dialogue with other education professionals. Going to sleep on a Tuesday night was virtually impossible as my head buzzed with new ideas that I could take back and implement in my school library.

Every connected educator with whom I had conversed had classrooms and schools that seemed to be amazing hubs of learning, engagement, innovation, and fun. After a few months of engaging in weekly #EdChat conversations, I thought my life as a newly connected educator was going to be sunshine, rainbows, and lollipops. The experience for me, however, was different.

Burned Out and Drifting

Let's stop for a minute and go back in time to before my QR code journey led to Shelly Terrell's 30 Goals Challenge and the #EdChat Twitter chat. At this point in my career, I had been sculpted from an eager, energetic, new teacher to an educator who was basically doing the bare minimum to collect a paycheck. Year after year of beating my head against institutional brick walls had finally molded me into a submissive, path-of-least-resistance educator. I did as I was told, taught what I was told, in the order and at the pace I was told. Not only had I submitted through the years, but I had also lost confidence in my own ability to think and create meaningful lessons and engaging activities on my own.

The 30 Goals Challenge and the #EdChat Twitter chat sessions had poked around in my subconscious and ignited the few embers barely left burning after all those years. This renewed fiery passion for sharing learning with others had been reawakened, and I found myself at a difficult crossroads. In one direction lay a new path being forged by innovative educators across the country who were dissatisfied with being molded into submission and forced to use lesson plans inadequate to suit the needs of digital age learners. In the other direction lay a well-worn path that led to retirement and the comfort of tenure. This path also came without the risk that the other path held—the risk of stepping up, speaking out, and trying something different, something that wasn't in the pacing guide but was just as relevant and more meaningful to the students I was teaching.

I had a choice to make: stand up, step up, and start beating my head against proverbial brick walls again, or take the last eight years I had as an educator and leisurely stroll into retirement. It may surprise you to know that I initially chose the latter.