



ADA Social Media Accessibility Guide for OCPS District and School Social Media Coordinators (2026 Update)

Digital accessibility is a legal requirement for public education under ADA Title II, and social media posts are explicitly included as digital content requiring accessible formats.

- Social media posts must meet WCAG 2.2 AA standards beginning April 24, 2026.
- Only new social media posts created after April 24, 2026, must meet the standards.
- Pre-existing social media posts do not need to be updated — unless you are pinning them or resharing them.

This quick guide helps ensure your posts are accessible — and compliant — without being overwhelming.

1. Accessibility Requirements for Social Media

1. Images & Photos

To comply with ADA's "effective communication" requirement, images must include **alt text** so screenreader users can understand the content.

- Alt text should describe the **purpose** or **essential content** of the image.
- Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Threads, and ParentSquare all have options to add alt text.

NOTE: When posting to Facebook through Meta Business Suite, it will create alt text for some images, *but it is not ADA compliant*. You **must override** it and type in your own.

- If the image contains complex or lengthy information (e.g., calendars, event schedules), you may provide a **text alternative elsewhere**, such as in the caption or via a link to an accessible webpage on your school/district website.
- If a specific person (like the Principal, Superintendent, award winner) is the subject, include their name in the alt text.

ParentSquare specific instructions:

- For ParentSquare posts, click the **"i" icon** on the image to add alt text.
- Type a description and click **Save**, or click **Generate AI suggestion**, then click **Save**.
- Beginning April 24, 2026, ParentSquare **will require alt text** for images before allowing a post to be saved and/or sent.

Examples of good alt text:

- “Students planting trees during the school’s Earth Day event.”
- “Superintendent Maria Vazquez greeting students on the first day of school.”
- “Graphic showing early release schedule: dismissal at 12:30 p.m. on May 21, 2026.”

Do NOT:

- Use vague text like “Image,” “Student,” or “Click here.”
- You do NOT need to describe each person or what they are wearing.

Pro Tip: Limit the number of photos in a single post so you are not overwhelmed with the alt text requirements.

2. Videos With Speech (Talking Videos)

- Videos must include **captions** for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Auto-captions may be used but should be reviewed and edited for accuracy.
- You can also burn the captions into the video. Several programs offer this option for free including Canva, Adobe Express, and Instagram Edits.
- Some platforms accept **SRT files** for accurate captions.

3. Music-Only or No-Narration Videos (Most School Social Media Videos)

Written Caption Descriptions: A written video description placed in the caption is ADA-compliant and is the recommended method for schools, universities, and local governments when posting videos with only music and visuals.

Example: Your school wants to post a reel of a Veterans Day parade on campus.

As the caption, you could write: *“Students and staff celebrate Veterans Day as veterans participate in a parade through the school campus.”*

This is fully ADA compliant. It gives blind or lowvision users the essential meaning of the video.

Some schools like writing fun, punchy social media captions. You can still do this, but you would need to add a Video Description in the caption.

Example:

Happy Veterans Day! 🙌❤️ #VeteransDay

Video Description: Students and staff cheer as local veterans parade through the school campus.

On-screen text says: "Thank you for your service."

**If the video has text overlays (e.g., 'Homecoming Friday!'), that text MUST be transcribed in the caption description so screen readers can 'read' the video.*

4. Accessible Text

How you type matters for screen readers.

- **Use CamelCase for hashtags:** capitalize the first letter of every word so screen readers can “hear” the individual words (✓ #OCPSParentAcademy, not #ocpsparentacademy).
- **Limit emojis:** do not use more than three emojis in a row, and limit your total to three per post. A screen reader will announce every single one (e.g., “Smiling face with hearts” three times).
- Never use an emoji to replace a word in a sentence.
- Avoid using **ALL CAPS** for long sentences, because screen readers may read them as individual letters.

5. Text, Graphics & Color

- Posts must be readable for people with low vision.
- Maintain **color contrast** of at least **4.5:1** for normal text and **3:1** for large text.
- Avoid light text on light backgrounds or text embedded in busy photos.
- Add text to the post caption rather than embedding long paragraphs in images.

6. Documents & Flyers Posted to Social Media or ParentSquare

- If you upload or link to documents (PDFs, forms, flyers), they must also be accessible under ADA Title II.
- Images or flyers are allowed, but pertinent text must also be included as alt text and included in the body of the post.
- Never post a **QR code** as the only way to access information in a digital post — a QR code on a phone screen cannot be scanned by that same device.
- Use a descriptive text link in the caption instead.

2. Questions to Ask Yourself Before Posting

Encourage your school social media coordinators to pause and check before hitting publish:

1. **Can someone using a screen reader understand this post?**
 - Does every image have clear alt text?
 - Are videos described in the caption if needed?
2. **Can someone who is deaf fully understand this video?**
 - Does it have accurate captions?
3. **Can someone with low vision read this?**
 - Is the text high contrast and large enough?
 - Is any text embedded in a graphic difficult to read?

4. Am I using accessibility features built into the platform?

- Alt-text tools
- Caption upload tools
- Accessibility settings (Instagram, Facebook, X, Threads, and YouTube all support these)

5. Is the information clear, simple, and free of unnecessary jargon?

- Accessibility = clarity for everyone.

3. Examples of Compliant vs. NonCompliant Posts

1. Compliant Post Example

Photo of students in a robotics class.

Alt text: “Two students testing a small robot on a classroom table.”

Caption: “Congrats to our 7th-grade robotics team for qualifying for regionals!”

Why compliant: Includes alt text, clear message, no text embedded in a difficult to read graphic.

2. NonCompliant Post Example

A flyer with important dates posted with no alt text, lots of tiny text, low contrast colors.

Why NOT compliant: Text in the image is unreadable for many users, no alt text describing the dates, low contrast violates minimum accessibility requirements.

3. Compliant Video Example

A 20second clip of the principal welcoming students with: Accurate captions burned in, or auto-generated and reviewed/edited for accuracy.

4. ❌ NonCompliant Video Example

A video announcing graduation details with: No captions, important text shown only on screen.

Why NOT compliant: Deaf users miss information, violates ADA effective communication requirement.

4. Social Media Accessibility Cheat Sheet

1. IMAGES (Alt Text)

- **The Rule:** Every image needs a description for screen readers.
- **How-To:** Use the “Alt Text” field in the post settings (Facebook, IG, LinkedIn, X).
- **Meta Business Suite Warning:** Do not trust “Auto-generated” alt text; you **must** override it with your own.
- **ParentSquare Tip:** Click the 'i' icon to add alt text before saving.
- **What to write:** Describe the **action** and **context**.
 - ✅ “7th graders in red shirts planting a community garden.”
 - ❌ “Image.jpg” or “Students.”
- **Pro-Tip:** If the Superintendent or a specific Principal is the focus, include their name!

2. VIDEOS (Captions & Descriptions)

- **Talking Videos:** Must have 100% accurate captions. If you use auto-captions, you **must** edit them for typos, names, and grammar.
- **Music-Only Videos:** Must have a **Video Description** in the post caption.
- **On-Screen Text:** If words appear on the screen (e.g., “Early Release Friday”), those exact words **must** be typed into the Video Description.

Format: Video Description: Students walking into school. On-screen text: Welcome Back, Hornets!

3. TEXT & POSTING

- **Hashtags:** Use **#CamelCase**. Capitalize the first letter of every word so screen readers can pronounce them.
 **#OCPSBetterTogether**
 **#ocpsbettertogether**
- **Emojis:** Follow the **Rule of Three**. Limit to three emojis in a row, and no more than three per post. Keep them at the end of the text, never in the middle of a sentence.
- **Readability:** Keep graphics simple. Avoid light-colored text on light backgrounds. If you can't read it easily, a screen reader definitely can't.

4. FLYERS & DOCUMENTS

- **The Rule:** Flyers posted as images are allowed, but all key information must also appear in the post caption.
- **The Fix:** If you post a picture of a flyer, you **must** type all the important details (Date, Time, Location, Link) into the post caption itself.
- **Links:** If linking to a PDF, ensure the PDF is an "Accessible PDF" (not a scanned image of a paper).
- **Crucial:** Never use a QR code as the only way to access information in a digital post — a QR code cannot be scanned from the same device it's displayed on. Provide a descriptive text link in the caption instead.

5. THE 60-SECOND CHECKLIST (Before you hit Publish)

- Did I add **Alt Text** to every photo?
- Did I check/edit the **Captions** on my video?
- If there is music but no talking, did I add a **Video Description**?
- Are my hashtags in **#CamelCase**?
- Did I limit my **Emojis** to 3 at the end?
- Is the **Text** on my graphic high-contrast and easy to read?