

Union Jr/Sr High School is now "Twittering"!

For those of you that use "Twitter", Union Jr/Sr High School is now relaying information through Twitter, the popular messaging service found at www.Twitter.com. Simply start following @UnionRockets and you will receive important information such as Links to our District News, "Re-Tweets" from other important Twitter accounts related to Education, as well as Emergency Information when necessary.

Don't "Tweet" yet?

We would be more than happy to introduce you to this popular web service! Below are a few questions that will help you get started and will be kept up to date to help guide you understand Twitter!

1. What Is Twitter, and Why Do I hear so Much About It?
2. What Are "Followers" and Am I Considered one?
3. Why Twitter and Why Be a Part of the Twitter Trend?
4. Will Union Jr/Sr High School be Joining Other Popular Trends Such as MySpace or Facebook?
5. Is Twitter Safe and Should My Child Be Allowed To Access It?
6. Do I or My Child need to use Twitter?
7. Will Twitter get Students Involved with Academics?
8. I Now Have a Twitter Account, But Who Should I Follow?

What Is Twitter and Why Do I hear so Much about It?

Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that allows you relay information by sending short messages that are 140 characters in length, called "tweets", to your friends or "followers." Using Twitter, you can opt to receive certain "tweets" on your mobile phone and be notified directly via text message when important information needs to be relayed quickly and efficiently. For instance, in the event of an emergency, Union Jr/Sr High School would be able to notify our patrons by text message along with traditional methods already in place.

While Union Jr/Sr High School will not rely solely on the use of the Twitter messaging system to transmit important or emergency information, it does provide another medium in which to broadcast it. Twitter is not meant to replace and will not replace the information provided on the District Website or other traditional methods.

What Are "Followers" and Am I Considered one?

As the name implies, "Followers" are a group of people who "follow" a particular person, group of people, or place that wishes to share information with a specific audience via their Twitter account. This means that if you are a part of the followers of "UnionRockets " for example, you wish to receive any information we feel is important to the Students, Parents, Teachers and Staff of Union School Corporation.

Why Twitter and Why Be a Part of the Twitter Trend?

Twitter is rapidly becoming more than just the "latest" trend; in fact the site was actually founded back in 2006 and has been referred to as the "Text Messaging System of the Internet." The reason for this largely because originally the concept for Twitter was to allow users to communicate with a relatively small group of people through the SMS services (commonly referred to as "text messaging services") available through various cell phone providers. As you can imagine, sending the same message from a cellphone to a group of people can be tedious work depending on how big your targeted audience is.

Today many celebrities, politicians and other people of interest use the Twitter service to communicate to anyone that wishes to keep up-to-date with current news, issues or events that are important to that Twitter user.

Union Jr/Sr High School will continue to provide the latest information on www.usc.k12.in.us; however the Twitter service allows a brief summary of information to be sent out to its "followers" who are interested in receiving updates and reminders that are important to the patrons of Union Jr/Sr High School. If you decide to use Twitter to receive updates from Union Jr/Sr High School, you will be alerted when news articles are posted on the district website, and will get short updates about specific school activities. This information includes links to the Union Jr/Sr High School News Items, Reminders about events such as ISTEP+ Testing, Fund-Raisers, Sports and other Local events, among other issues of interest.

The information relayed through the Union Jr/Sr High School Twitter account is maintained by the same webmasters who make the district news available on the front page of the District Website. Because of this the information is maintained by the same source that has already been making information available on the District Website. The difference between the Main district site and the Union Jr/Sr High School Twitter account is that you as a web user need to visit the www.usc.k12.in.us website, while the Twitter service sends the information to you as a short 140 character description with a link directly to the news item it pertains to.

Because the information relayed through Twitter has been made available through other means, each message can be sent out in as little as a simple mouse stroke! This means that each tweet is made available with very little effort and delivered almost instantly to any number of Union Jr/Sr High School, Parents, Teachers and Staff!

Will Union Jr/Sr High School be Joining Other Popular Trends Such as MySpace or Facebook?

Union Jr/Sr High School will also be using Facebook to get information out to more of our patrons.

Is Twitter Safe and Should My Child Be Allowed To Access It?

Twitter, as with many other websites on the Internet is as safe as the information provided to it. As explained before, Twitter is a messaging system that allows people interested in your "Tweets" to be notified when you have something to say. This means that the information posted on such a "tweet" would be instantly available to any number of people all over the world. It is important to not disclose any personal information on Twitter that you would not want anyone else to see.

Because of the safety precautions needed to be practiced while Twittering, you as a parent or guardian would have to make the decision on whether or not you wish to allow your children to access the Twitter Service. Please note however that it is impossible to ensure that Twitter be completely inaccessible to Union Jr/Sr High School Students. This is due to the fact that Twitter has many different interfaces ranging from the Twitter website itself along with other websites that interface with the service, to hand-held devices such as mobile phones and iPods. It is because of this that it is better to

discuss internet safety and best practices with your children as this also prepares them to understand what to expect and how to react to the rest of the Internet.

Do I or My Child need to use Twitter?

As mentioned before, Union Jr/Sr High School will only send information through Twitter that is already available on-line on the District Site or through other traditional means. The information supplied through Twitter is simply relayed to users of the service. Think of it as a subscription to a Newspaper or Magazine. The information is sent directly to Union Jr/Sr High School Staff, Parents and Students on their Twitter account to help spread the information already made available on our website. You are not required to use Twitter to be up-to-date with the latest News from Union Jr/Sr High School.

Will Twitter get Students Involved with Academics?

Generally, students do not go out of their way to visit the District website. While Twitter cannot change this, as many Businesses and Companies have learned, it takes Twitter users little effort to "follow" the information other Twitter accounts have to offer.

I Now Have a Twitter Account, But Who Should I Follow?

Twitter has many celebrities, politicians and other people of interest; however, it is best to always look for the "Twitter Verified" or logo when deciding to follow a new account. Don't worry, you can always un-follow them later should you need to.