

Kisha Coulanges – 3rd Place

What Role Does Social Media Have in Today's Educational System?

Social media is fast-growing. Day by day, people are always finding new ways to use it. More recently, we see it being used in schools, not to like someone's picture or comment under a funny post, but to teach students more effectively. When not at school, students can also communicate with their peers, like an online study group, whether it be via e-mail, call, or text. Technology can become a great asset both in the classroom and out because it allows teachers and students to communicate to a larger number of people, makes learning easier, and parents can get more involved.

One of the most prominent uses of social media is hinted in its name: communication. People are now able to interact with others on the other side of the world in a fraction of the time. A student has the ability to speak to a much larger audience than a teacher or fellow classmate they may see in school. Also with the increasing popularity of social media, teachers can connect with other teachers and share different teaching techniques. As a student myself, I have first-hand experiences with the aforementioned uses of social media. For example, for most of my classes, my classmates have created Messenger group chats in which we update each other on assignments. We also have discussions on various topics on the lessons we learned for that particular assignment. This is especially useful to someone that may have been absent on a school day.

Because social media is immensely popular among teens, it only makes sense to teach us in a language we understand. There are times when a student has a hard time comprehending the lesson that is being taught. There are platforms like YouTube with millions of educational

channels. For example, my Biology teacher would let my class watch a Crash Course video on a topic that we don't understand too well. In particular, a resource like Crash Course allows people to ask questions and jumpstart discussions. This is useful as it is not only productive, but is usually a quicker and easier way for students to learn and to express their opinions and questions to a much larger audience than those they may share a classroom with.

Student and teachers aren't the only ones who benefit from the use of social media in the classroom. Parents have an advantage as well. They can keep in touch with the teachers and keep an eye on their children. An example of a site that is used for this reason is Remind. With this site, the parents, teachers, and students are all on the same page. Sites like Facebook allow parents to stay updated on upcoming activities.

I personally feel that social media usage in class can easily become either a fad or an effective tool in the future of education. With the right intentions and responsibility behind it, it could be very useful in the future. It puts students on a more even playing field in their post-high school lives as more people are taking online classes. It also provides updated teaching methods that blend in with our quickly modernized society. As long as students are aware of the caution they should take while they have access to social media, it will all be fine. After all, colleges look for an excellent digital footprint that reflects on the person applying for a spot in their schools.