



	EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL
Category:	PERSONNEL
Policy:	414
Approved Date:	February 19, 2014
Revised Date:	
Page:	1 of 2

EMPLOYEES: SOCIAL MEDIA

Policy 414

“The issues are not principally technological...It is important to know how to dialogue and, with discernment, to use modern technologies and social networks in such a way as to reveal a presence that listens, converses and encourages.” ~ Pope Francis

Rationale:

Definition of Social Media:

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows end users to engage in multi-directional conversations in or around the content of the website. Social media includes but is not restricted to Facebook, MySpace, Nigh, Twitter, Second Life, YouTube, blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, podcasts, forums, content communities, email and messaging.

Introduction

The Catholic Independent Schools Diocese of Prince George (the “CISPG”) recognizes the importance of providing employees with a clear understanding of the impact of using social media and its appropriate use. In an ‘online world’, the lines between public and private, personal and professional can become blurred. Even when employees are social networking on their own time, they may be identified as working for and sometimes representing the CISPG in their online communications.

We recognize the use of social media and networking as one means of communicating in the online world. However, we also recognize that the inadvertent misuse of social media by employees has the potential to put the reputation of the CISPG, its schools and its employees at risk. The following policy has been established to ensure best practices and mitigate both the CISPG and employees’ exposure to risk.

Teachers employed by CISPG are required to adhere to the BC Teaching Standards as published by the BC Teacher Regulation Branch, specifically “Educators act with integrity, maintaining the dignity and credibility of the profession. They understand that their individual conduct contributes to the perception of the profession as a whole. Educators are accountable for their conduct while on duty, as well as off duty, where that conduct has an effect on the education system. Educators have an understanding of the education system in BC and the law as it relates to their duties”.

All employees are reminded of the CISPG Catholicity clause in their contracts of employment when participating in all forms of social media.

Code of Conduct for Employees: Social Networking**Procedure:****General**

1. Use good judgment. Think about the type of image or information you want to convey. You are responsible for your online communications.
2. As role models for students and a representative of the CISPG and the school, you must ensure that your use of social networking, even on your personal time, does not reflect negatively on your professional reputation or that of the CISPG or which are contrary to the teachings of our Catholic faith.
3. Use only school-sanctioned sites and tools or other school-approved means of communicating online with students and parents. All communication with students and parents should be formal, courteous and respectful and should pertain to school related matters.
4. Respect the law in relation to your online communications. Protect the confidentiality of information regarding students and their families. Ensure compliance with copyright requirements. Do not make comments online which are defamatory of others.

Specific

1. Avoid impulsive, inappropriate or heated postings. Remember that what you post may be viewed and archived permanently online.
2. Monitor all content you or others post to your personal social media accounts to ensure that it is consistent with your role in the CISPG and professional standards. Remove any material which is inappropriate or contrary to this policy.
3. Online activities must not interfere with the performance of your job or your effectiveness as an employee of the CISPG.
4. Online communications should reflect the principles of honesty, respect, responsibility, and consideration of others.
5. Do not disclose any confidential or personal information about students or their families in online communications. Do not post photographs or videos of students without the written permission of the parent/guardian.
6. Social networking sites and online postings are not necessarily private. Never criticize students, fellow employees or the CISPG on online sites.
7. Use dedicated CISPG sites and tools for online communications with students and parents. Should you wish to create other sites and/or use other online forums for communicating with students, you must obtain approval from parent/guardian. All sites and online forums for communicating must comply with this Policy and access must be appropriately restricted (e.g., to students assigned to your class or activity).
8. Do not request or accept any current or former minor student (person under the age of 19 years) as 'friends' on social networking sites. In the case of a student minor who is a family member, it is okay to 'friend them' with the recommendation that you inform them of your responsibility as an employee for a Catholic school system and that you ensure posts and links are appropriate.
9. Do not exchange personal phone numbers, email addresses, or photographs with students, except if the students are your own relatives.
10. Ask friends not to tag you in any photos or videos without your permission and remove anything that is not appropriate to your role in the CISPG.

Contraventions of this Policy may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal.