



POLICY SECTION: ADMINISTRATION

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION
SYSTEM- ACCEPTABLE USE

POLICY NO: A. 29

Date Approved: April 19, 2012- Board	Date of Next Review:	Dates of Amendments: November 15, 2001 – Board, BM p. January 2000
Cross References: Advertising in Schools policy (A.25)		
Appendix:		

POLICY

This Acceptable Use Policy was last updated as of March 2012 through a consultative process between the Toronto Catholic District School Board and its stakeholders (Associations, Board, Students, Parents and Schools)

POLICY STATEMENT

Within the context of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and our Christ-focused mission and vision, the Board's electronic communication system is to support learning communities that will transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

It is important to prepare students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information, as well as opportunities to develop relevant skills and to actively participate in the global community. The Board recognizes the impact of information technology on society. We have a responsibility to ensure that all learners develop a respect for the power of information technology and that technology is used ethically to promote values consistent with Catholic teachings and the Catholic Graduate Expectations.



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The use of information technology is a support for staff to perform their daily operational activities and work responsibilities in meeting the goals of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. Information technology provides staff further opportunities for professional development and relationship building in service to the school community and public.

The utilization of technology by all users must uphold an equitable culture of caring, inclusion, dialogue, and learning and should always strive to respect the dignity of the human person.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

These administrative procedures are established to:

- Increase safety for students and staff
- Ensure alignment with TCDSB Mission, Vision and core values
- Enhance teaching and learning
- Enhance relationships and community
- Improve efficiency of technology systems
- Facilitate communications and the sharing of information with the local community, including parents, social service agencies, parishes, government agencies, and businesses
- Enhance employee skills, knowledge and exchange of information with their peers.

DEFINITIONS

Users include but are not limited to employees, students, trustees, association staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, community service workers, and temporary staff.

Electronic communication includes but is not limited to Internet use, e-mail, social media, browsing, publishing or posting on web sites, downloading, accessing or storing files and use of personal electronic devices.



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The use of an electronic communication system within the Board has an educational and professional purpose. The term educational and professional purpose includes classroom activities and limited high quality, self-discovery activities. It also encompasses professional and career development and administrative services that support education.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES – ALL USERS

All users must abide by the administrative procedures outlined in this section.

1. Responsibilities

(a) The Board provides users with access to the Board's electronic communication system.

(b) The use of the Board's electronic communication systems is a privilege, not a right, and as such can be restricted or, if appropriate, removed altogether.

(c) Users are expected to use the Board's electronic communication systems in an ethical, lawful and appropriate manner as governed by applicable legislation, Board policies and procedures.

(d) The Board recognizes that parents share responsibility for transmitting Catholic values to their children and providing guidance in the appropriate use of the technology.

(e) Through this policy the Board will notify users about the Board's electronic communication systems and the expectations governing its use.

(f) The Board will expect educators to model and teach students proper standards of use, guide students on the appropriate use of technological resources and ensure that students understand the consequences of abusing their user privileges.



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(g) The Board will provide opportunities for professional learning to Board employees on the appropriate use of technological resources.

(h) All students will sign a "Student Access Agreement" in which they will commit to abide by this policy prior to receiving an individual user account and gaining access to the network resources and the Internet. If the student is less than 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign the agreement.

(i) The Board will provide students and parents with guidelines for student safety and appropriate, ethical use of technology and the Internet.

(j) All new employees and users affiliated with the Board must sign a "User Access Agreement" to abide by this policy prior to receiving a user account and gaining access to the network resources and the Internet.

(k) For employees and existing users, continued use of the Board's electronic communication system will be interpreted by the Board that the User has agreed to comply with the applicable Board policies and procedures.

(l) The school Code of Conduct must be consistent with and abide by the regulations within this policy.

(m) This policy contains restrictions on accessing, storing and disseminating inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be consistent with governing laws nor with the values and code of ethics advocated by the Board.

(n) The Board will make every effort and has taken reasonable precautions to avoid the misuse of Internet and electronic communication services. However, the possibility exists that users may receive or access content that is not in line with this policy. The Board's Internet content filtering system is considered a support



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to staff and not a replacement for properly supervising student access to the Internet.

2. Personal Safety

(a) Users should protect their personal information and follow the available guidelines and resources published by the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) of Ontario.

3. Unacceptable Activities

(a) Unauthorized Access - Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Board's system or to any other computer system through the Board's network or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log on through another person's user account or accessing another person's files.

(b) Malicious Access - Users will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the performance of the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or any other malicious means. These actions may be illegal and will be dealt with as such.

(c) Illegal Activities - Users will not use the Board's system to engage in any illegal act, such as arranging for the sale or purchase of restricted substances such as alcohol and drugs, engaging in criminal activity or threatening the safety of a person.

(d) Cyberbullying / Threats / Harassment - Users will not use the Board's system to engage in inappropriate behaviours including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, personal attacks, threats, harassment, hate motivated and discriminatory behaviours. Users who use the Board's technology or use personal electronic devices to engage in such inappropriate behaviours at school, school related events or in circumstances that negatively impact on the school climate may be subject to



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disciplinary measures including those outlined in the Education Act, the Board or school Code of Conduct and relevant legislation.

(e) Inappropriate Content - Users will not use the Board's system to access or distribute material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature). Special exceptions may be made if the purpose of such access is to conduct legitimate research, learning and both the teacher and the parent have provided prior approval for access.

If Users inadvertently access inappropriate content as defined above, they should immediately disclose this incident to their teacher or immediate supervisor. This will protect Users against an allegation that they have intentionally violated this policy.

(f) Impersonation - Users will not impersonate or employ a false identity in any electronic communication.

(g) Inappropriate Language - Users will maintain a professional tone in all communications. Inappropriate language includes but is not limited to:

(i) Use of obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, bullying, harassing, racist or disrespectful language.

(ii) Posting information that, if acted upon, could cause damage to or disruption of resources and/or services.

(iii) Personal attacks, including prejudicial, discriminatory, libelous or slanderous attacks.

(iv) Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web sites.

(v) Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information meant to harm the reputation of a person or an organization.



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(h) Unauthorized Equipment, Software and Media – Users will not connect unauthorized equipment, install unauthorized software or distribute media files (where it violates the use terms of applicable software licensing agreements or copyright laws) on the Board network and computer systems.

(i) Commercial Use - Users may not use the Board's system for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services or purchasing goods or services for personal use.

(j) Political Lobbying - Users may not use the Board's system for political lobbying unless pre-approved by the Director of Education. However, Board staff and students may use the system to analyze legislative measures and communicate personally with their elected representatives to express their personal opinions on political issues. Such views should not be disseminated to others.

(k) Use of Board E-mail Addresses and Distribution Lists - Board e-mail addresses and distribution lists are not permitted for use by external individuals, organizations or unions unless for Board pre-approved business or as pre-approved by the Director of Education.

4. Respect for Privacy

The use of information technology resources is monitored to help ensure the network and computing systems are available and that users are kept secure and in conformity with this policy in order to further health, safety and security for all users and resources. Users should have no expectation of privacy when using the Board's network or computer systems.

(a) Users should be aware that the board monitors the operation of the network and computer systems generally to alert ICT staff of any service outages or anomalies. This information is collected in system logs. The information collected in the ICT systems may be utilized or disclosed to trigger or augment the investigation for possible violation of law, Board policy or procedures or



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employment obligations. The Board will provide periodic reminders to staff regarding this on-going system administration process.

(b) Users will not alter the content of a message, without the permission of the original author who sent the message. Proper judgement should be exercised in deciding which messages are appropriate to forward to other recipients.

(c) Users will not distribute or forward chain letters, jokes, and inappropriate materials or engage in spam e-mails.

(d) All Users have obligations and/or protection under the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Users shall respect an individual's personal privacy and will not share personal information without the direct permission of the individual.

5. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

a) Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user. Users will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet.

b) Copyright is the protection of creative works and authors' rights. Users will respect the rights of copyright owners, including software manufacturers and providers of digital media. If the users are unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner.

c) Content published on web sites must be original or written permission obtained for the use of such copyright material and its ownership fully acknowledged.

d) Visitors and Users to the TCDSB public web site may copy any information for their own personal use but may not otherwise publish or reproduce any such information in any manner, without the prior written consent of the TCDSB.



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6. Web Sites

(a) The Board will provide resources and templates to host and create school, department and individual (my site) web sites.

(b) All web site content created by web site publishers must be consistent with the mission, values and educational aims of the Board and must comply with all applicable legislation, Board guidelines, policies and procedures.

(c) All web site content created by web site publishers must adhere to defined web page standards, formats and templates consistent with the branding of the Board.

(d) The publishing of web sites must follow the approval workflow defined by the Board guidelines.

7. Bring Your Own Computer / Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)

(a) Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, video/camera phones, still/video cameras, computers and recording devices must be securely stored and in silent mode by the User on any Board school property during regular school hours.

(b) Users may choose to bring their own personal electronic devices on Board premises which may be connected to the Board's Guest network for Internet access only.

(c) The ICT departments will not provide any support or troubleshooting of hardware, software or network connectivity issues on personal electronic devices.

(d) Unless legally licensed, Users will not install software licensed by the Board or the Ministry on personal electronic devices.



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(e) Software licensed for home use by teachers and students by the Board or the Ministry is only permitted within the provisions of the licensing agreement granted.

(f) Users will ensure that personal electronic devices are protected (if applicable) with anti-virus malware protection software.

(g) If a personal electronic device is suspected to be interfering with the Board's network and systems, the User will be required to cease connecting and using the personal electronic device on the Board's premises.

(h) Any personal electronic device with image, video capture and recording capabilities are absolutely prohibited in areas where there is an expectation of privacy (e.g., washrooms, change rooms). The recording and taking of photographic images of a person or persons, on school property, at school events, and during school activities and/or hours, is prohibited without the permission of the person or persons being photographed or the principal or designate. The consent of the parent/guardian is required for a student with special needs.

(i) The electronic transmission or posting of recordings and photographic images of a person or persons on school property, at school events, and during school activities and/or hours, is prohibited without the permission of the person or persons being photographed or the principal or designate. The consent of the parent/guardian is required for a student with special needs.

(j) The use of personal electronic devices and images or recordings of activities that may negatively impact the school climate must not be captured, transmitted or posted under any circumstances.

(k) In the event of an emergency, lockdown, or evacuation the school or building administrator will provide instruction to the community pertaining to the acceptable use of personal electronic devices in the particular emergency conditions.



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(1) All Users should be aware that in some instances transmission, recordings or images may be reviewed and relied on, even if obtained in a manner not wholly consistent with this policy.

8. Limited Personal Use

(a) The limited personal use of computer technology whether Board provided or personally owned devices used on Board premises is permitted and is governed by these regulations.

(b) The limited personal use of computer technology must not interfere with Board business, student learning and with the user's duties and/or obligations.

(c) Subject to the above users may engage in respectful and responsible electronic communication that is in line with these regulations and in the best interests of the TCDSB.

(d) This privilege of limited personal use may be revoked or limited at any time when utilizing Board-provided technology.

9. Respect for Resource Limits

(a) Personal files and content not related to curriculum and Board responsibilities and duties should not be stored on Board computers, servers and information systems.

(b) Users will avoid downloading large amounts of material. Time and storage space are limited resources. If it becomes necessary to download a large file, users will do so at a time when the system is not being heavily used and immediately remove the file when no longer required.

10. System Security



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(a) Users are responsible for the use of their individual account and should take reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide their user account and password to another person.

(b) Users will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible computer security problem. Users are not authorized to deal with computer security problems as this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.

(c) Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the Board's virus protection procedures.

11. Disciplinary Consequences

(a) Users' violation of this policy will be fairly handled subject to any obligations contained within applicable Collective Agreements, Board and local school Code of Conduct, legislations (i.e., Teaching Profession Act, Ontario College of Teachers Act, Education Act, etc.) or Board policy and procedures.

(b) Disciplinary action will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and assist the user to conform to this policy and model appropriate behaviour on an electronic network and computing system. The disciplinary action may include but is not limited to deny, restrict, or suspend user access to the Board system resources. Other disciplinary action may also be appropriate.

(c) Some violations may be an offence under Canada's Criminal Code. Appropriate legal authorities will be contacted if there is any suspicion of illegal activities. The Board will cooperate fully with legal authorities in any investigation relating to illegal activities conducted through the Board's technology systems, which may include providing authorities with information gathered through collection, inspection, monitoring or investigation.



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12. Indemnification of the Board

(a) Users agree, by virtue of access to the Board's computing and electronic communication system, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Board for any suits, claims, losses, expenses or damages, including but not limited to litigation costs and legal fees, arising from or related to the user's access to or use of Board electronic communication, network, computing systems, services and facilities.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES – STUDENTS

In addition to the administrative procedures for all users, the following section outlines additional administrative procedures applicable to all students enrolled in the TCDSB. All students must abide by the administrative procedures outlined in this section.

13. Personal Safety

(b) Students will promptly disclose to a school administrator or educator any electronic communication that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

14. Bring Your Own Computer / Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)

(a) Students may use their own personal electronic device in the classroom for educational purposes and only when directed by the classroom teacher. At all other times student use of a personal electronic device in the classroom is not allowed. A student who uses a personal electronic device in the classroom without teacher direction is subject to regular classroom and school disciplinary procedures.

(b) Students may use their own personal electronic device outside of the classroom only in designated study areas where personal electronic devices are allowed according to school policy. A student whose use of a personal electronic device contravenes school policy is subject to regular school disciplinary procedures.



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(c) Personal electronic devices are not allowed in examination rooms, unless instructed by a teacher.

(d) When such devices are being used inappropriately by Students, the Teacher will send the student to the school administrator who may confiscate, and securely store the device until the matter is appropriately addressed.

(e) The school administrator will determine any other situations where the use of a personal electronic device is restricted or prohibited based on such use compromising school security, personal safety, individual privacy, academic integrity and negatively impacting on the school environment.

15. Disciplinary Consequences

(a) In the event that a student has violated this policy, the student (and parent when applicable) will be provided with notice of such violation and will meet with the school administrator.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES – EMPLOYEES

In addition to the administrative procedures for all users, the following section outlines administrative procedures applicable to all employees of the TCDSB. All employees must abide by the administrative procedures outlined in this section.

16. Personal Safety

(a) Any employee that is in receipt of an inappropriate, harassing, obscene or offensive electronic communication that makes them feel uncomfortable or is a risk to their personal safety is to bring the matter to the attention of their immediate supervisor and follow the protocol as outlined in the Respectful Workplace Policy.

17. Respect for Privacy



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(a) Employees will have in their possession electronic copies of student data which is to be safeguarded per the Ontario Student Record Guidelines, Ontario Health Information Protection Act and Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Any employee who suspects data of this nature has been lost or access to such data compromised must notify their immediate supervisor and further report this incident to the Board's Privacy Officer.

18. Bring Your Own Computer / Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)

(a) Users should not store any Board confidential information (including but not limited to data and personal information of students, employees, etc.) on personal electronic devices.

19. Limited Personal Use

(a) The limited personal use of computer technology should only occur during employees' non-work time (i.e. during breaks, lunches or outside of normal business hours) and not interfere or affect an employee's work performance.

20. System Security

(a) When employees perform work at home, do not allow others, including family and household members, to use your Board provided user account or computer.

21. Intellectual Property

(a) Subject to any written agreement between the teacher and Board, if a teacher voluntarily creates intellectual property that is wholly outside of their teaching duties not utilizing any Board resources whatsoever and is not utilized in any manners in the course of the teacher's employment the intellectual property belongs to the teacher.



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APPENDIX – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Internet refers to an electronic communication system connecting thousands of computers all over the world through which millions of individual subscribers can interact and share information.

Viruses and Malware are destructive computer programs that replicate or attach themselves to an existing program without authorization.

Social Media is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

Website is a collection of related web pages containing digital content (text, images, videos, etc) hosted on a web server accessible from the Internet or a private network.

Internet content filtering is technology commonly used by schools to prevent users from viewing inappropriate web sites or content.

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communication technologies by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Spam e-mail or shortened as Spam is the common term for unsolicited e-mail.

Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) are technology devices including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, video/camera phones, still/video cameras, computers and other recording devices.

Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.



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Copyright is the protection of creative works and authors' rights.

Intellectual Property is property created using original thought such as art, inventions, creative writing, designs, et