



502.3 AP Social Media Use

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LEGAL REFERENCE:

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Personal Information Protection Act
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Canadian Criminal Code
- Copyright Act
- ATA Code of Professional Conduct
- Teaching Profession Act

CROSS REFERENCE:

- [401BP Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Workplace and Learning Environments](#)
- [402.2AP BTPS Staff Code of Conduct](#)

BACKGROUND

The Division recognizes that the use of social media is a viable means to enhance learning. The Division supports the use of social media to interact knowledgeably and responsibly for this stated purpose. This procedure applies to all Division students, staff, and School Council representatives.

PROCEDURES:

1. Interactions Representing the Division
 - 1.1 Unless given written permission from a principal or supervisor, a user is not authorized to use social media sites to represent a school, School Council, department, or the Division.
 - 1.2 In cases where a user has sought permission to represent a school, School Council, department, or Division, the user must identify themselves by name and as an employee of the Division or School Council executive.
 - 1.2.1 Access and permission to use the Division's logo can be granted by emailing the Board Secretary/FOIP Coordinator.

- 1.2.2 School logos will not be used without first obtaining written permission from the principal or supervisor.
- 1.3 Any use of electronic media by a user must be consistent with the duty of loyalty each user owes to the Division and must not transgress any law or civil duty of care owed to the Division or any other person. Breach of this requirement will be considered to be conduct that is subject to action by the Division and the Division will take such action as it considers is warranted.
- 1.4 Contractors or visitors are required to obtain permission from principals or supervisors prior to sharing social media content that involves the Division.

2. Respect, Privacy, and Confidential Information

- 2.1 Users will not disclose confidential student information, images, or confidential school, department, or personnel records without first obtaining written consent from the principal, supervisor, and the guardian(s) for students under the age of eighteen (18) who are not independent students, as defined in the Education Act, or without first obtaining written consent from the principal, supervisor, and from a student eighteen (18) years of age or older who is an independent student as defined in the Education Act.
- 2.2 Users will not use social media sites to be defamatory, harassing, or bullying towards any person and will not espouse or support any position or opinion or statement that is contrary to Board policies and Division administrative procedures.
- 2.3 Users will not engage electronically in behaviour or comments that would reflect negatively on a school or the Division's reputation or the reputation of any person employed with or holding elected office with the Division.
- 2.4 Users may be disciplined if their social media comments and postings, whether personal or school/Division related, are not in compliance with this procedure or any other policies or procedures of the Division.
- 2.5 Users participating in social media activities will respect copyright laws, not only in relation to the content produced on the social media sites, but also in relation to the software that enables them to operate.
- 2.6 Users participating in social media activities acknowledge that all information posted to sites is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) if that information falls within the ambit of the information protected by and governed by FOIP.

3. Staff-Student Online Correspondence

- 3.1 Online correspondence between staff and students must be related to course work, or school sanctioned clubs/activities. Social media conversations between a staff member and a parent/guardian are subject to the provisions of this Administrative Procedure.
- 3.2 Principal(s) must approve school-based social media groups that will be supervised and monitored by a teacher from each participating school.
- 3.3 Principal(s) will ensure that all school-sanctioned social media groups have at least one

(1) other staff member has administrative access to the social media group.

3.4 Principals will inform staff members participating in school-created social media groups with students that the ethical standards for the teaching profession apply at all times, whether in a traditional school environment or an online environment.

3.5 Division staff shall not initiate “friend” invitations from students unless the networking is part of an existing school course or school club structure and at least one (1) other staff member has administrative access to the social media group.

4. Personal Social Media Account

4.1 Staff are reminded to conduct any personal business on their home computers/personal devices on their own time.

4.2 Staff and teachers are expected to model appropriate behaviour including in an online environment.

4.3 Staff have a professional relationship with the parents of students and the communities in which they interact with, it is important to maintain the proper boundaries of these relationships. This includes maintaining a professional relationship and behaviour in social media.

4.4 All staff may have a right to free speech, but they also have an obligation of fidelity to their employers and adhere to policies. Teachers have to continue to adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct. Staff need to be careful of what positions they espouse online.

5. Social Media Accounts

5.1 Schools, departments, or individual staff wanting to create a social media account on behalf of the school/School Council/fundraising arm of the School Council must request that a social media page be established from the school principal. Any accounts created for a specific group within the school to be reviewed annually for ongoing need or must be deleted or removed when the school year is over.