



Department: Human Resources
Section: Employee and Labour Relations

The Annapolis Valley Regional School Board recognizes that employees will utilize electronic communication and social media which includes software, applications (including mobile devices), email and websites to interact, create and exchange information online in the course of their employment, as well as personal use. Social media is defined as dynamic and socially-interactive, networked information and communication technologies. Employees are expected to maintain professional boundaries with all areas of communication, including technological, in order to maintain public trust and appropriate professional relationships with school community members, especially students.

Specifically

- 1.0 It is expected that employees:
 - 1.1 know and respect proper professional boundaries with all stakeholders, especially students.
 - 1.2 refrain from posting disrespectful, damaging and derogatory comments about the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board business and employees.
 - 1.3 recognize that representatives of the Board have the right to monitor messages and files stored on the Board and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development sites.
 - 1.4 will limit the personal use of Board-owned electronic communication. Non-work-related internet use should be limited to break times, lunch times, and before and after work.
 - 1.5 model appropriate online behaviour by using acceptable language and image filters.
 - 1.6 take effective precautions when utilizing social media sites to ensure personal safety and to protect against identify theft.
 - 1.7 consider intellectual property rights, copyright and ownership of data.
 - 1.8 know that appropriate social media usage is expected at work and off-duty.
- 2.0 Electronic communication with students should occur at appropriate times of the day and through established education platforms, such as a school webpage or Board email account. The following guidelines exist to ensure professional boundaries with students are maintained:
 - 2.1 Avoid exchanging private texts, phone numbers, personal email addresses or photos of a personal nature with students.
 - 2.2 Decline student-initiated “friend” requests and do not issue “friend” requests to students.

- 2.3 Ensure that students may not access personal or inappropriate postings by using appropriate privacy settings.
- 3.0 Electronic communication with all school community members is expected to be formal, courteous and professional.
- 4.0 Employees should not share information with any school community member that would not be willingly and appropriately shared in school or school-related settings.
- 5.0 The privacy and security of social media accounts should be properly managed and maintained.
- 6.0 Inappropriate postings on a social media account should be removed immediately or revisions may be requested.
- 7.0 Misconduct utilizing electronic communication and social media will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.
- 8.0 Electronic communication and social media can be used in criminal or civil proceedings. Employees should also be aware that inappropriate use of electronic communication and social media may result in criminal charges and conviction or civil action, such as defamation, breaching privacy legislation such as *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (Nova Scotia)*, harassment, luring a child under the *Criminal Code*, or possession or distribution of child pornography.

Monitoring

- The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this administrative procedure.
- This administrative procedure will be monitored annually.

Superintendent Approved: Mar 19/12
Ref: BP 305.26, FOIPOP Act, Criminal Code
Monitoring Date: Annually
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