



SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

# **Learning Environment**

## **Responsible Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

Policy Number LE-25

It is the policy of the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (The Board) to provide and maintain access to information and communication technology for use by students, teachers, Board staff and other users in a manner which is consistent with the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, the Board's strategic plan, mission and vision statements, Catholic virtues and values, Ministry of Education guidelines and with all federal and provincial laws and regulations.

### **Procedural Guidelines Follow**

*Approved: Board Meeting #16-2013 (Wednesday, November 27, 2013)*

*Revised: Board Meeting #6-2018 (Wednesday, April 25, 2018)*

# **Procedures and Guidelines Supporting** Policy Number LE-25 **Responsible Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

## **Responsible Use Procedure for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Students and Staff**

1. This document outlines the expectations related to the responsible use of information and communication technology (ICT) and its associated resources, including hardware, software, network, Internet usage and social media. It is reasonable to expect that all individuals or groups who use Board technology understand and comply with the expectations outlined in this procedure.
2. Students will be required to review age appropriate information related to this policy, with a focus on digital citizenship, responsibilities and consequences. Parents and students are required to read and sign a Responsible Use of Technology Agreement annually.
3. Staff and Board Trustees are expected to read and understand Policy LE-25 and the supporting procedures and guidelines. All new staff must complete a module in the online staff training portal related to the responsible use of ICT. Each year, staff will be required to complete a responsible use of ICT refresher via the online staff training portal. This refresher requires staff to review and agree to policy LE-25 and its supporting procedures and guidelines.
4. Other members of the school community including visitors and volunteers are expected to understand and adhere to this policy and its supporting procedures and guidelines when accessing Board ICT.
5. Users must recognize that they do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy with regard to the use Board ICT (this includes personal and business related use). Information stored on Board devices and on the network, are subject to the Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), which gives members of the public the right of access to information upon request. This information would include emails, voicemails, etc.

## 6. **Digital Citizenship**

*Definition: Digital citizenship outlines the norms of appropriate and responsible behaviour as it relates to technology use, including hardware, software, Internet usage and social media.*

The *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* were designed by the Institute of Catholic education to guide school boards in their programming and work in Catholic education. One of the expectations is to be “responsible citizens who: act morally and legally as a person formed in Catholic traditions, accept accountability for their own actions and contribute to the common good.” This particular expectation is a reference point for students and staff who are members of a digital community.

The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board is committed effective digital citizenship and expects the same of all students and staff. This includes creating a positive school and work culture which supports the safe and responsible use of ICT through the following areas:

### a. **Access**

The Board is committed to providing equitable access to ICT for students and staff. This includes:

- i. Accessing a variety of quality resources;
- ii. Accessing technology when and where the learning occurs;
- iii. Providing adequate training and support on the effective use of ICT resources; and
- iv. Providing opportunities to collaborate and communicate with local, national and international communities.

### b. **Communication and Relationships**

Connecting with one another from a distance or through a screen name, is very different from a face-to-face encounter. It is easier to behave irresponsibly, cruelly, or unethically and it is also common for others to misinterpret the tone and context of messages or posts.

The Board expects students and staff to be mindful of their online exchanges. Always take time to recognize that different audiences require different types of communication and ensure words are chosen wisely.

### c. **Literacy**

Through ICT at the Board, students and staff have access to a wide range of tools and resources for learning. It is important for users to know that information found online is not always accurate or high-quality.

The Board is committed to enhancing the digital literacy skills of its users by helping to identify the legitimacy of online sources and promoting strategic online searches.

**d. Etiquette and Appropriate Use**

Students and staff are responsible for appropriate behaviour when using the board's ICT resources just as they are in a classroom, a school, a work site, or Board sponsored activity. Appropriate use of ICT resources is outlined more specifically in the Responsibilities section below.

**e. Security and Privacy**

Security and privacy are important in the digital world. It is the responsibility of students and staff to treat Board ICT with the same level of protection and respect they would with personal belongings. This means keeping digital security top of mind when using ICT resources, including backing up data, virus protection and maintaining the integrity of passwords.

In addition, as noted in 5.0 above users do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy when using Board ICT resources and are subject to the *Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act*. The Board also has the right, but not the obligation to, inspect and/or monitor any ICT resources.

**f. Copyright**

Understanding and adhering to copyright laws are an important component of digital citizenship. In our digital culture we can gain access to information quickly and easily without fully understanding where the content comes from or to whom it belongs. It is important for students and staff to always consider, understand and adhere to copyright laws. This includes gaining permission to use copyrighted work and understanding that piracy and plagiarism are unethical and unlawful.

**g. Creation, Collaboration and Communication**

Technology allows users to learn, create, collaborate and communicate. Students and staff should be aware that all content including work plans, course binders, project documentation, electronic correspondence, presentations, artwork and any other documentation, which is completed (or in progress) for the purposes of a user's role at the Board, are considered to be the intellectual property of the Board.

**7. Responsibilities**

In order to ensure appropriate use of Board technology, including hardware, software, Internet usage and social media, students and staff are required to:

- a. Use the Board's ICT resources, Internet and social media for educational purposes only;

- b. Maintain the distinction and separation of those digital activities that are personal from those that are provided to support learning;
- c. Teaching staff should not issue or accept friend requests or follow students on social media. An exception would be if a staff member has a classroom account where curricular information is shared with students, then students may follow that account. Staff should also consider the privacy implications of accepting these requests from parents;
- d. Model appropriate behaviour as a digital citizen by using ICT resources in a moral, ethical and lawful manner;
- e. Observe standards of academic honesty by never misrepresenting the work of another as an original work (plagiarism), acknowledge sources by using appropriate citation methods and obey all applicable copyright laws;
- f. Receive appropriate approval prior to adding software, applications and social media accounts on ICT resources;
- g. Always maintain the integrity of passwords. This means never disclosing your own passwords to anyone or attempting to access the board's technology with another person's password. Each user shall be responsible for all activities arising from the use of their password. Users shall take reasonable precautions to protect the integrity of the board's systems, including using adequately complex passwords;
- h. Be aware and abide by the Board's responsible use guidelines. Specific violations of these guidelines include:
  - i. Using Board technology to create, process, distribute or access illegal, offensive, pornographic and/or inappropriate materials;
  - ii. Sending/receiving defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening or racially offensive messages;
  - iii. Downloading or storing obscene or offensive material on board ICT resources (computers, networks, social media);
  - iv. Downloading, storing or sharing media files, including music and video files on board computers, network, social media that are illegal, offensive, obscene, inappropriate or that are not intended for board purposes;
  - v. Knowingly accessing sites containing material contrary to the human rights code or clearly inappropriate in a Board environment, including sexually explicit, racist or defamatory material;
  - vi. Uses that are malicious, unethical or in violation of accepted community standards or Board policies;
  - vii. Uses that violate any federal or provincial laws, including the Ontario Human Rights Code;
  - viii. Knowingly creating, exchanging, transmitting and/or downloading messages or data that are offensive, harassing, obscene, libelous, abusive, discriminatory, or threatening or that encourage violence;
  - ix. Conducting business activities which are unrelated to the user's duties and responsibilities to the Board;

- x. Attempting to access another person's account or private files or misrepresenting yourself as another person in electronic communications;
- xi. Sending anonymous or inappropriate, unsolicited mass email messages, such as chain letters, jokes or spam;
- xii. Computer-hacking and malicious related activities, like phishing/ransomware; and
- xiii. Attempting to disable or compromise the security of information contained on Board computer systems.

## 8. **Consequences**

The Board retains the right to deny access to anyone using Board provided resources, regardless of location, when used for a purpose other than the spirit and intention for which they are granted.

The Board also retains the right, but not the obligation, to inspect any computer or ICT device, or system and to monitor the use of any of the technology, including, without limitation, inspecting the contents of files, voicemail, email, or other digital communication. This action may include, but not be limited to, disciplinary action according to the law, and the policies and procedures of the Board.

### a) **Student Disciplinary Action**

In the event that a student has violated this Responsible Use Agreement, the student (and the parent/guardian) will be provided with notice of such violation by the school principal and be given an opportunity to present an explanation.

Disciplinary action will align with the violation and will be consistent with:

- The Board's Student Discipline Policy (Safe Schools); and
- The standards of behaviour as outlined in the Provincial Code of Conduct and the Board Code of Conduct, as they apply to all members of the school community including students, parents and guardians, all staff members, volunteers and visitors who access the Board-owned devices or network, while on Board property or to conduct Board related business.

Disciplinary action can include (but not be limited to):

- Restriction and/or denial of access to the Board's networks;
- Contacting appropriate legal authorities if there is suspicion of illegal activities; and



- Consequences as outlined in the Board Code of Conduct, e.g., suspension or expulsion.
- b) **Staff Disciplinary Action**
- Users are expected to maintain the Board's values and the integrity of its technology. For staff, there is also an expectation that student use of ICT resources are monitored/supervised appropriately. For this reason, any user found to be abusing the privilege of the Board regarding use or access to its technology or contravening the terms of the Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment. The Board also reserves the right to inform appropriate law enforcement authorities or other officials of any offences or possible offences under the Criminal Code or other applicable statutes.day day day

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