



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE – 440-5

Social Media

Area: Operations
Policy Reference: Communications (PO440)

Approved: February 24, 2023
Revised:

1. Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to support Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”)’s requirement to encourage respectful community engagement on social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, etc.) and enhance student success, well-being and achievement.

2. Definitions

Harassment (*Ontario Human Rights Code*) – engaging in a course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome.

3. Procedures

3.1 Social Media Administrator(s)

- 3.1.1 Social Media Administrators are individuals who are trusted with monitoring, contributing to, filtering, analyzing data and otherwise guiding the social media presence of Board-related or school-related affiliate groups (e.g., any staff, student, parent/guardian/caregiver or community member group that is established and authorized to operate by the Board and/or school) and committees. The Communications department, Director, Supervisory Officers, Principals, or other persons approved to carry out this function by their supervisor and communications, are designated to act as a Social Media Administrator(s).
- 3.1.2 Board, school, affiliate group or committee social media accounts must have at least one Social Media Administrator who is responsible for sharing content on Board-related or school-related social media sites and responding to posts

directed to the account. A secondary or back-up Social Media Administrator is recommended.

- 3.1.3 Any individual(s) who is not a Director, Supervisory Officer, Principal or member of the Communications Department, requires approval to be a Social Media Administrator and must complete the [Social Media Account Creation/Update Form](#).
- 3.1.4 The Director and Supervisory Officers are the approving authority for system-level, department and/or affiliate social media accounts. Principals are the approving authority for school and school-affiliated social media accounts.
- 3.1.5 Prior to setting up a social media account, the Social Media Administrator (Principal, affiliate group representative) must submit the [Social Media Account Creation/Update Form](#). This form must also be used for any changes to the account (including closure). Social Media Administrators should wait to receive the confirmation email with setup instructions before creating/updating a social media account.
- 3.1.6 For system-level, department and/or affiliate groups, the Supervisory Officer must always have administrator rights/access to the social media accounts.
- 3.1.7 For school and school-affiliated groups, the Principal must always have administrator rights/access to the social media accounts.
- 3.1.8 Approval to act as a Social Media Administrator can be withdrawn by the Director, Supervisory Officer, Principal and/or Senior Manager of Communications, at any time and without advance notice.
- 3.1.9 Social media accounts and associated Social Media Administrator(s) will be reviewed by the Communications department at the beginning of each school year or at any such time that the supervisor of the department or Principal of the school changes.
- 3.1.10 The Social Media Administrator(s) is/are responsible for ensuring that all content that is posted or shared is timely, relevant information for the intended audience, such as education and school community news, and in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).
- 3.1.11 Upon submitting this information, each site is to be reviewed by the Social Media Administrator(s) for compliance with the Board's Communications Policy (PO440) and attendant administrative procedures, which includes the Media Consent Administrative Procedure (AP440-3).
- 3.1.12 When a Social Media Administrator transfers/leaves a school community or affiliate group or committee, the incoming Social Media Administrator should contact the Communications department to gain access to the existing school account.

3.2 Social Media Monitoring

- 3.2.1 All users shall adhere to the principle of confidentiality and ensure that appropriate social media boundaries are maintained.
- 3.2.2 Staff who are designated as Social Media Administrator(s) are responsible for monitoring their sites and any references related to their social media profiles.
- 3.2.3 Social media activity by staff or students that does not comply with the Communications Policy (PO440) or Code of Conduct Policy (PO610) and its attendant Administrative Procedure (AP610-1) shall be documented and reported to the school Principal or designate.
- 3.2.4 The Board will not tolerate any of the following on any Board or affiliated social media sites:
 - a) posts that discriminate against any one or group of people based on any of the prohibited grounds outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and/or any relevant Board policies;
 - b) profane or disrespectful comments;
 - c) harassment, bullying, defamation, pornography, gambling/gaming, or accessing information without consent;
 - d) comments or images that are slanderous, disrespectful, abusive, hateful or intended to deface or hurt anyone or any organization;
 - e) comments or images that violate the privacy of Board students, families, staff members or affiliates;
 - f) content that breaches the confidentiality of Board business information;
 - g) unsolicited promotion of products or services;
 - h) content that infringes on intellectual property or publication rights;
 - i) personally identifiable information such as one's identification numbers; and
 - j) the sharing of personal content on Board accounts.

3.3 Social Media Content

- 3.3.1 Board-affiliated social media forums are available for everyone to respectfully discuss topics related to education and/or school communities, and to share or celebrate positive news stories. These are also places where the Board and its schools will share news, upcoming events, and other information about Board-wide or individual school initiatives.

- 3.3.2 Except for teaching and learning purposes, all staff and students should refrain from accessing personal social media accounts during instructional periods.
- 3.3.3 When interacting with the Board's social media sites, participants should demonstrate respect, being mindful of the Code of Conduct Policy (PO610) and its attendant Administrative Procedure (AP610-1). Participants are personally responsible for their comments and posts, images, photos, usernames and any information that can be viewed by the public or by personal contacts.
- 3.3.4 Photos and names of students shall not be posted to social media sites without written and informed consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) or students (18 years of age/older) as per the administrative procedure for Media Consent (AP440-3).
- 3.3.5 Photos and names of staff members or associates shall not be disclosed in posts or comments on social media sites without consent (i.e. verbal or written).
- 3.3.6 Social media profiles must include the formal name of the school, group or committee which the site represents, along with the website and address.
- 3.4 Consequences for Inappropriate Use of Social Media
 - 3.4.1 Social networking (posting comments or photos or observing those of others) actions that do not comply with the Standards of Behaviour or Ontario Schools Code of Conduct are subject to be treated with the same consequences as provided in the referenced regulations. In addition, the Board reserves the right to:
 - a) remove:
 - unsolicited promotion of products or services;
 - posts that are considered spam or advertising;
 - posts that are off-topic, inappropriate or disruptive;
 - posts that advocate illegal activity;
 - posts that promote particular services, products or political organizations;
 - posts believed to infringe on copyrights or trademarks;
 - posts that violate any Board policies;
 - b) reprint or quote any post along with the name or username of the individual who posted;
 - c) ban or remove future posts from users who violate the Board's Social Media Policy;
 - d) implement consequences for student behaviour outlined in the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, including (but not limited to) detention, suspension or expulsion;
 - e) impose disciplinary action up to and including termination for breach of policies and administrative procedures by staff.

4. Sources

- 4.1 [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- 4.2 [Ontario Schools Code of Conduct](#)
- 4.3 [Standards of Behaviour](#)
- 4.4 [Ontario College of Teachers Professional Advisory: Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media](#)
- 4.5 [Ontario College of Teachers Act](#)
- 4.6 [Education Act](#)

5. Appendices

Nil

6. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 6.1 [Anti-Racism Policy \(PO200\)](#)
- 6.2 [Responding to Student Incidents of Racism and Discrimination Administrative Procedure \(AP200-1\)](#)
- 6.3 [Communications Policy \(PO440\)](#)
- 6.4 [Media Relations Administrative Procedure \(AP440-1\)](#)
- 6.5 [Communications During a Critical Incident or Traumatic Event Administrative Procedure \(AP440-2\)](#)
- 6.6 [Media Consent Administrative Procedure \(AP440-3\)](#)
- 6.7 [DCDSB Branding Administrative Procedure \(AP440-4\)](#)
- 6.8 [Code of Conduct Policy \(PO610\)](#)
- 6.9 [Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure \(AP610-1\)](#)
- 6.10 [Student Discipline Policy \(PO611\)](#)
- 6.11 [Student Discipline Administrative Procedure \(AP611-1\)](#)