



TCDSB Policy Register

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM – ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY--A.29

Policy:

The TCDSB provides employees and students with access to the Board's electronic communication system, which includes Internet access. Within the context of its mission and vision, the Board's electronic communication system assists in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the opportunity to communicate with people throughout the world.

Additionally, the system will be used to increase Board intracommunication, enhance productivity, and assist Board employees in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers. The Board's system will also assist the Board in sharing information with the local community, including parents, social service agencies, government agencies, and businesses.

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

Educational purpose does not include:

- 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.
- Political Lobbying - Users may not use the Board's system for political lobbying. However, Board employees and students may use the system to analyze legislative measures and communicate with their elected representatives to express their opinions on political issues.

Use by other external individuals, organizations or unions unless approved by the Director of Education, TCDSB distribution lists are not permitted for use by any of the above.

Regulations:

1. Board Responsibilities and Parental Responsibilities

- a) The Board will notify students and parents about the Board network and the policies governing its use. All students will sign a "Student Access Agreement" in which they will commit to abide by this policy prior to gaining access to the Internet and an individual,

class and/or school account. If the student is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign the agreement.

b) This policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be consistent with the code of ethics advocated by the TCDSB. The Board recognizes that parents share responsibility for transmitting Catholic moral values to their children. The Board will expect teachers to discuss with their students what material is and is not acceptable for access through the Board's system. The Board will expect parents to do the same.

c) The Board will provide students and parents with guidelines for student safety while using the Internet.

d) Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of the Internet if the system is accessed from home.

2. Personal Safety (restrictions for students only)

a) Users will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes addresses, telephone numbers, and other such personal information.

b) Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation.

c) Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

3. Illegal Activities

a) Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Board's system or to any other computer system through the Board's system, or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or accessing another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of browsing.

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

c) Users will not use the Board's system to engage in any other 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.

4. System Security

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 password to another person.

b) Users will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Users are not authorized to deal with security problems, because 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.

5. Inappropriate Language

a) Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.

b) Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, racist or disrespectful language.

c) Users will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.

d) Users will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial, discriminatory or slanderous attacks.

e) Users will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a user is told by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.

f) Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

6. Respect for Privacy

a) Users will not alter or report a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.

b) Users will not post private information about another person.

c) Users will not post chain letters or engage in spamming. Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.

d) Users will respect the Board's obligations under the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

7. Respect for Resource Limits

a) 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 from the system computer to their personal computer.

b) Users will check their e-mail frequently and delete unwanted messages promptly.

8. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- a) Users will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.
- b) Users will respect the rights of copyright owners, including software manufacturers. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user should follow the expressed requirements. If the users are unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner.

9. Access to Inappropriate Material

- a) Users will not use the Board's system to access 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 and both the teacher and the parent approve access.
- b) If students inadvertently access such information, they should immediately disclose the inadvertent access in a manner specified by their school. This will protect students against an allegation that they have intentionally violated this policy.

10. The Disciplinary Process

- 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 given an opportunity to present an explanation before the administrator.
- b) Disciplinary action will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. If the violation also involves another violation of any other provision of the school's Code of Behaviour, such violation will be handled in accordance with the applicable provisions of that Code of Behaviour.
- c) A school administrator may deny, restrict, or suspend a student's access to the Board's system upon any violation of this policy or other rules of the school.
- d) Appropriate legal authorities will be contacted if there is any suspicion of illegal activities.
- e) The Board will cooperate fully with legal authorities in any investigation relating to illegal activities conducted through the Board's system.
- f) Employee violation of this policy will be handled in accordance with the applicable Collective Agreement or Board policy and procedures.

Appendix B

Student Access Agreement

Student Section

Student Name _____

Grade _____

School _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

I have read the Toronto Catholic District School Board Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to follow the regulations contained in this Policy. I understand that if I violate the rules my access and account (when applicable) can be terminated and I may face other disciplinary measures.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Parent or Guardian Section

I have read/understand the Toronto Catholic District School Board Acceptable Use Policy. (I will supervise my child's use of the system if accessed from home.)

I hereby release the Board, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the Board system, including, but not limited to claims that may arise from unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.

I will instruct my child regarding any restrictions against accessing materials that are in addition to the restrictions set forth in the Toronto Catholic District School Board Acceptable Use Policy. I will emphasize to my child the importance of ethical use and following the rules for personal safety.

I give my child permission to access the internet and be issued an account (when applicable) and certify that the information contained in this form is correct.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Name _____

Home Address _____

Phone _____