



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

Policy Number: C-2

**Authority: 99-058/04-72/13-31/17-
06/20-54/23-64/25-18**

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is committed to proactive, timely, and open communication with all its stakeholders to strengthen relationships, promote programs and activities of the Board and to celebrate the values of Catholic Education. The NCDSB believes that communication and information are central to the effective, inclusive role that a school board plays in advancing student success and well-being. Effective communication helps to promote confidence, transparency and accountability in publicly funded Catholic education.

REFERENCES

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Ontario College of Teachers Professional Advisory: *Maintaining Professionalism – Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media*

NCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan

NCDSB Trustee Procedural By-Law

NCDSB Policy

E-20 Response to Tragic Events

E-23 Emergency Preparedness

P-19 Right to Disconnect from Work

T-10 Public Participation

NCDSB Administrative Procedure

APE034-1 Safe Schools: Code of Conduct

DEFINITIONS

Social Media

Encompasses software, applications, RSS feeds (including those running on mobile devices), blogs, wikis, email and websites which enable users to interact, create and exchange information online.

POLICY REGULATIONS

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 All NCDSB communication shall support and promote student learning and student success.
- 1.2 All NCDSB communication shall be open, honest, accurate, understandable, and timely.

- 1.3 All NCDSB communication shall demonstrate accountability to stakeholders for the resources used, the decisions made, and the outcomes achieved.
- 1.4 The NCDSB will provide opportunities for two-way communication and engagement with stakeholders.
- 1.5 All communication issued through social media must comply with the regulations of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The Chair of the Board, or designate, will serve as the spokesperson in matters of policy, budget and governance.
- 2.2 The Director of Education, or designate, will serve as the spokesperson in all matters relating to the operational matters of the NCDSB.
- 2.3 The Principal will serve as the spokesperson for matters relating directly to a school.
- 2.4 The Community Relations Officer and/or the Director of Education will provide guidance and consultation on all media requests and/or communication outputs as requested or required.
- 2.5 The Community Relations Officer will oversee and facilitate communication posted to social media, on the Board's behalf.
- 2.6 The Principal will oversee and monitor communication posted to social media, on the school's behalf.

3.0 EMERGENCY AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

- 3.1 Where reasonable and when situations warrant, the NCDSB shall make every attempt to use all platforms at its disposal to alert students, staff, parents, the media, and the broader community about emergency situations that may be an immediate threat to the health and well-being of students and staff.
- 3.2 The Director of Education, or designate, will be the official spokesperson of the Board during crisis situations.
- 3.3 School Administrators and Supervisory Officers shall maintain ongoing and timely communication with the Office of the Director of Education on matters that may require the activation of emergency preparedness strategies.

4.0 SOCIAL MEDIA

- 4.1 The use of social media shall be consistent with the mission and vision statement of the Board, the Catholic values of the school system, and all related guidelines and expectations.

- 4.2 NCDSB Staff and Trustees are required to maintain a sense of professionalism and recognize that communication on social media can shape public opinion about oneself, professions in an education setting, school, the school board or public education generally. Social media conduct must maintain the cultivation of a healthy, safe, inclusive and discrimination free environment.
- 4.3 Inappropriate use of social media and electronic communications is prohibited.
- 4.4 All efforts should be made by NCDSB Staff and Trustees to maintain a clear distinction between personal and NCDSB social media accounts.