



### SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

#### Introduction

Social media is comprised of powerful communication tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. However, these tools also hold the possibility of a host of unintended consequences. Because using these tools can blur the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, the Division has compiled the following guidelines to help clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when using social media and to help identify and avoid potential issues.

Social media is a category of applications generally characterized as an interactive social community where all content is collaboratively generated by users of that site. The opportunity for users to generate their own content through the uploading of materials, or the exchange, rating, and editing of existing media makes communication multi-directional. Rather than a conversation solely between two people, social media conversations can occur between many people at any one time. Social media includes group networking sites, video and photo sharing sites, blogs, forums discussion boards, and/or websites.

#### Social Media Guidelines

Social Media is intended to complement Division and school websites.

##### 1. Confidentiality and Copyright

- 1.1 Protect confidential information by not posting information about the Division, its students and/or their families, and its employees.
- 1.2 Comply at all times with applicable provincial legislation, Division Policies, and Administrative Procedures with respect to all postings, including photographs.
- 1.3 Ensure that proper permission has been granted before posting any name or picture on any social media site.
- 1.4 Comply with copyright laws when using social media.
- 1.5 Adhere to all applicable Division privacy and confidentiality policies.

Employees who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action.

- 1.6 Respect copyright and fair use, being mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the Division.



### 2. Division and School Logos

- 2.1 The Division or school logos are not to be used for endorsements.
- 2.2 The Division logo, school logos, and Division iconography are not to be used on personal social media sites.
- 2.3 The Division name is not to be used to promote a product or cause.
- 2.4 The Division's name may not be used to promote a political party or candidate during an election period.

### 3. Liability

- 3.1 Liability and responsibility for what is posted on one's own site and on the sites of others lies with the person who is posting.
- 3.2 Individuals are held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the courts).

### Rules of Engagement for All

- 4. The goal of the Division social media is to share important information with our public and to engage in an open and respectful dialogue.
  - 4.1 Division social media is a forum for open conversation not personal issues.
  - 4.2 Division social media is not intended to circumvent regular communication channels for sharing personal issues and concerns.
  - 4.3 Questions for specific employees are to be addressed directly and privately to the employee.
  - 4.4 Comments regarding a personal issue with the Division, a school, or a staff member will be removed.
  - 4.5 Respect for others is expected.
  - 4.6 Personal attacks or comments that are deemed offensive will not be tolerated and inappropriate remarks will be removed.
  - 4.7 The purpose of Division social media is to enhance communication, foster engagement, and celebrate the achievements and activities of students, staff and the broader community. .
  - 4.8 Conversation is to relate to the Division, its schools, and its activities.



4.9 Division social media is not intended for promoting products or expressing personal political views.

4.10 False information will be removed and replaced with factual information.

4.11 All comments need to be appropriate for an educational environment and for children of all ages.

Division social media is for the Division community. It is intended to be a space where all stakeholders can feel comfortable sharing information about the Division, its schools, or its activities. Abuse of the above guidelines may lead to removal of a specific post or to the person who posted it being blocked.

### 5. Social Media Guidelines for School Councils

5.1 When a school council wants to create a social media account on behalf of the school's fundraising arm, it must request the creation of an account through the principal.

5.2 The principal is the school leader and is responsible for the administration and day-to-day operations of the school. The principal or designate must be co-owner of the account and have access.

5.3 School Council social media accounts are seen as extensions of the school and must reflect the mission, vision and values of the Division. Comments are to be monitored. If a concern is raised about a school council social media account, the principal can/will remove contents.

### 6. Social Media Guidelines for Staff

#### 6.1 Staff Use of Social Media Representing the Division

6.1.1 Staff members are authorized to use social media sites to represent a school (including departments, sports teams, etc.) or the Division only with permission from their Principal or the Superintendent.

6.1.2 Staff members can access school social media on their Division supplied device.

6.1.3 Principals and site managers will review this Administrative Procedure with all staff on an annual basis.

6.1.4 Prior to introducing any social media to a school or classroom, staff are to familiarize themselves with this administrative procedure.

6.1.5 Staff members are encouraged to stay current with their employee organization's advice in constructively using social media.



### 6.2 Staff Use of Social Media Not Representing the Division

- 6.2.1 Division staff are encouraged to use social media to promote the Mission of the Division.
- 6.2.2 Staff must also be aware that their use of social media may impact their relationship with their employer, as it is the expectation that all staff will conduct themselves in a manner that positively reflects the Division as per the employee's contract and professional code of conduct that may apply.

### 6.3 Staff – Student Online Correspondence

- 6.3.1 All online correspondence between staff and students must be related to course work or school sanctioned clubs/activities, and these communications should only be through Division owned accounts/devices, such as ECSRD email or Google Classroom, Microsoft platform, or a Division/School approved communication platform (such as Remind). Staff should not be communicating with students via personal social media platforms or through personal text/iMessage/WhatsApp or other types of personal platforms.
- 6.3.2 Division staff members must be aware that the ethical standards for the teaching profession apply at all times, whether in a traditional school environment or an online environment.
- 6.3.3 Division staff shall not initiate or accept "friend" or "follow" invites from current Evergreen Catholic students on personal social media platforms under any circumstances.

## 7. Social Media Guidelines for Students

- 7.1 Students may not access social media on school networks or on school devices.
  - 7.1.1 Social media platforms are restricted from our school networks and devices and include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, WhatsApp, X, Discord, Pinterest.
- 7.2 Students and their parents or guardians annually review and agree to responsible use as outlined in the ECSSD Appropriate Use Expectations and student codes of conduct as per AP 350 Student Conduct and AP 171 Bullying and Threatening Behaviour.



- 7.3 Students will be held accountable should their social media comments and postings, whether personal or school/Division related, result in a disruption to a school or the Division environment or negatively impact an individual or group.