

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

NO. 320

SUBJECT: RESPONSIBLE USE OF THE INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES BY STUDENTS

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 265 (1) (a) and (j) Duties of Principal: Maintain Order and Discipline and Care of Pupils, Ontario Regulation 298 Section 20 (g) (h) Duties of Teachers: Ensure Reasonable Safety Procedures and Maintain Consistent Disciplinary Practices*

Related References: *Board Policy No. 13 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters; Administrative Procedure 140 Computers: Acceptable Use and Security; AP 351 Code of Conduct; AP 352 Promoting Positive Student Behaviour; AP 357 Violence-Free Schools; AP 358 Student Suspension; AP 359 Student Expulsion*

1. Implications of the Use of Technology

- 1.1 The use of a range of communications technologies continues to increase in our schools and communities at an enormous rate. The proliferation of the Internet has created unprecedented opportunities for a range of purposes - to access unlimited information, and to communicate spontaneously with a virtually infinite audience, from personal recipients to a global, anonymous public. The worldwide web has changed our world, offering an unparalleled resource, but also associated challenges. As the technology has expanded at an astounding rate, so have the implications related to safety, privacy, and intrusion in our schools and communities.
- 1.2 The use of the Internet and text messaging for bullying and harassment is a serious problem of increasing magnitude. These activities, when taking place off the school site or outside school hours, normally are not school matters, but rather community or police matters. On occasion, however, these activities can have an impact on the school and negatively affect the safety and the learning environment at the school, and thereby become school matters and issues of concern for school administrators.
- 1.3 Cellular phones (and other electronic signaling devices) are disruptive if they are activated in class. Even if used for silent messaging, incoming signals distract the student's attention away from the instruction and can interfere with both learning and teaching.
- 1.4 The use of integrated digital cameras in cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) can be used in a manner that violates the privacy and dignity of others.
- 1.5 Communications devices also have the potential to be used for academic dishonesty.

- 1.6 This administrative procedure acknowledges the attributes of the emergent technologies as educational and communications tools, and devices that may be seen as promoting safety, while recognizing also that these devices may be used in a way that potentially has a negative impact on safe, caring, and orderly schools.

2. The Principal's Duty and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The principal has a duty to maintain order and discipline in the school.
- 2.2 A "school" is defined in the Education Act, Section 1, as "the body of elementary school pupils or secondary school pupils that is organized as a unit for educational purposes under the jurisdiction of the appropriate board".
- 2.3 The principal, in consultation with the area supervisor, will determine whether off-school conduct constitutes a school matter, due to its impact on the school environment.
- 2.4 The principal may consider such factors as the following in determining whether off-school conduct is a school matter:
 - 2.4.1 Whether there is evidence that the person or persons who have been threatened/intimidated are consequently impaired in their ability to progress in their studies or duties at school;
 - 2.4.2 Whether criminal charges have been laid and whether the perpetrator has conditions of the court placed upon him/her in regard to attending school; and
 - 2.4.3 Whether the conduct is injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or affects school safety and security.

If the principal determines that certain off school conduct has had or is having a negative impact on the school, she or he may impose discipline in accordance with board policies and procedures.

3. Responsibilities of Students

- 3.1 Students are accountable for behaviour off school property that has a negative impact on the school environment, including but not limited to behaviour that greatly harms the tone or dynamics of the school or the safety or security of its members.
- 3.2 Where a student uses the internet or other technologies to threaten, harass or demean another member, or members, of the school community, and where this action interferes with the member's or members' safety or ability to function in the school, the student shall be subject to board policies and procedures.
- 3.3 Students are responsible for activity and content on the internet accessed by their passwords; consequently, students should not share their passwords with other users.

4. Cell Phone/Electronic Signaling Devices

- 4.1 School administration and school staff will establish expectations for the appropriate use of cell phones, smartphones, MP3 players, pagers, personal digital assistants and similar types of communications devices during school sanctioned activities. These expectations will be communicated to students and parents annually.

- 4.2 Cellular telephones and other mobile technology with camera capabilities are absolutely prohibited in areas where there is an increased expectation of privacy (e.g., washrooms, change-rooms).
- 4.3 The taking of photographic images of a person or persons, on school property, at school events, and during school activities and/or hours, is prohibited without the permission of the person or persons being photographed and the principal or designate.
- 4.4 The electronic transmission or posting of photographic images of a person or persons on school property, at school events, and during school activities and/or hours, is prohibited without the permission of the person or persons being photographed, the principal or designate, and where the student is below the age of 18, the consent of the parent/guardian.
- 4.5 Violations under Section 4 will be dealt with according to board and school policies, procedures, and protocols.

5. Loss, Theft or Confiscation of Devices

- 5.1 The school is not responsible for students' personal electronic devices in the event of loss, damage or theft. Students are advised not to leave personal electronic devices at school beyond the end of the school day.
- 5.2 Where a student violates this administrative procedure, the device may be confiscated and returned to the parent or guardian (or student 18 years of age and older) after the instructional day, or as appropriate.