

<b>Use of Technology and Digital Citizenship</b>	
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<b>Next Scheduled Review:</b> 2027-2028	
<p><b>Associated Policies &amp; Procedures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-62 Use of Technology and Digital Citizenship</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-63 Social Media</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>I-02 Records and Information Management</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-82 Records and Information Management Procedure</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>I-07 Privacy Protection Policy</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-81 Privacy Protection Procedure</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-51 Security Breach Procedure</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>I-24 Fraud Management</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-24 Fraud Management</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>I-36 Trustee Code of Conduct</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>II-39 Progressive Discipline &amp; Safety in Schools Code of Conduct – Suspensions &amp; Expulsions</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-44 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>II-40 Bullying Prevention and Intervention</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>II-45 Equity and Inclusive Education</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-54 Equity and Inclusive Education</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-60 Student Groups in Catholic Schools</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>III-14 Employee Code of Conduct</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>IV-04 Loss or Damage to Personal Items</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-101 Information Security Procedure</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-102 Hate or Bias Motivated Incidents Involving or Impacting Students</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-103 Electronic Monitoring of Employees</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-104 Multi-Factor Authentication for Employees</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>VI-107 Use of HCDSB Purchased Computing Technology</u></a></li> </ul>	

## Purpose

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) supports the benefits that technology can bring to its daily operating activities, and to student achievement and well-being. All users are required to know and abide by this policy in order to ensure information technology resources are being used in a safe and responsible manner.

## Application and Scope

This policy applies to students, staff, trustees, volunteers, and any individual using HCDSB technology as defined in this policy.

## References

[College of Early Childhood Educators](#)

[Copyright Act](#)

[Criminal Code](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Growing Success](#)

[HCDSB Code of Conduct and Standards of Behaviour](#)

[HCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

[Institute for Catholic Education \(ICE\)](#)

[International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\)](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#)

[Ontario College of Teachers](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Ontario Safe Schools Code of Conduct](#)

[PPM 128 - The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct](#)

[PPM 164 – Requirements for Remote Learning](#)

## Definitions

**Bullying** – is behaviour that makes the person being bullied feel afraid or uncomfortable. It can be in the form of unwanted repeated aggression or happen one time. It can be carried out by one person or a group of people.

Repeated bullying is persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation.

Bullying can occur in situations where there are real or perceived power imbalances between individuals or groups, and may be a symptom of racism, classism, homophobia, sexism, religious discrimination, ethnic discrimination or other forms of bias and discrimination. Bullying can also be based on, but not limited to, body size, appearance, abilities, or other real or perceived factors. Perceptions about differences are often based on stereotypes perpetuated in broader society. A power imbalance may occur between a student and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or receipt of special education.

Bullying can take different forms. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Physical:** for example, hitting, kicking, shoving, damaging or stealing property
- **Verbal:** for example, name-calling, mocking, put-downs and shameful, threatening, humiliating or discriminatory comments
- **Social/Relational:** for example, damaging friendships, spreading gossip, rumours or excluding others from a group including teasing, threatening, and other hurtful acts
- **Written:** for example, writing notes and graffiti that are hurtful and insulting
- **Cyber-bullying:** is the act of engaging in bullying behaviours through electronic means such as social media platforms, email, text or direct messaging, digital gaming and/or communication applications. Examples of cyber-bullying may include:
  - sending or sharing hateful, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating electronic communication or images via text messages, emails, direct messages
  - revealing information considered to be personal, private, and sensitive without consent
  - making and/or engaging, and/or participating in fake accounts on social networking sites to impersonate, humiliate and/or exclude others
  - excluding or disrupting access to, a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts and during digital gaming sessions
  - Increasing the use of digital platforms enhances the threat of cyber-bullying as well as other safety risks

Bullying, including cyber-bullying, may intersect with other forms of sexual exploitation including, but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. Traffickers and other sexual predators are increasingly using fake accounts to pose as acquaintances or friends of children and youth to lure, groom and recruit them into engaging in sexual acts or services. Children and youth who experience bullying are at increased risk for being sex trafficked.

**Digital Citizenship** - Users recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world, and they act and model in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.

**Guest Network** (HCDSB-GUEST) – The network that is limited to guests of the HCDSB where a user may access the internet and limited HCDSB technology.

**HCDSB Network** -The primary corporate network where access to HCDSB technology is restricted to HCDSB students, staff and trustees.

**HCDSB Supported Tools** - online digital programs for use and supported within HCDSB

**HCDSB Technology** - Technology resources include, but are not limited to, computers, tablets, phones, cellular/mobile technology, servers, networks, Internet services, printers, peripherals, IOT devices (Internet of Things), computer applications, data, email and collaboration tools, as well as approved third-party Internet service providers to HCDSB include E-Learning Ontario and online textbook vendors. The examples of the services they provide are software, virtual learning environments and digital textbooks.

**IOT (Internet of Things)** - is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects that are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.

**Personal Mobile Device** - refers to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the Internet (such as a cellphone, tablet, laptop or smartwatch).

**Social Media** - refers to the use of web-based technologies (websites/blogs, platforms and/or applications) that enable users to communicate and share information online.

**User** - A user is any individual granted authorization to access HCDSB technology, as defined above.

## Principles

HCDSB is committed to preparing our students for the workplace and for success in a world that continues to evolve through advances in technology.

Fundamental to student success is the ability to use technology responsibly to gather, evaluate, construct and share knowledge in a 21st Century world. The objective is to develop the HCDSB community as global citizens and 21st Century learners who strive to achieve the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

At HCDSB, educators and learners collaborate in innovative school and classroom communities that encourage student engagement, learning and achievement. As such, HCDSB is committed to:

- creating a positive school climate that supports the achievement and well-being of all students and upholds all human rights;
- taking reasonable precautions to ensure that data is secure and safe and should be used for intended purposes only;

- committed to using technology resources responsibly;
- complying with federal and provincial legislation, as well as, HCDSB policies and corresponding operating procedures;
- supporting innovative teaching practices and instructional methods enabled by technology to more precisely address the learning needs of all students;
- engaging students in authentic, personalized, relevant inquiry learning;
- modernizing schools and classrooms that support and enhance innovation in learning;
- providing high capacity network infrastructure, software deployment strategies, cloud-based applications;
- mapping the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations to the 21<sup>st</sup> century (global) competencies;
- providing staff with training and resources to better utilize technology relevant to their learning needs.

## Requirements

HCDSB is committed to providing education that is distinctively Catholic, nurturing the call to love and serve by creating positive climates for learning and working.

As such, all users of HCDSB technology:

- are not permitted to engage in cyberbullying, transmit, request, submit, or publish any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, pornographic, threatening, offensive, racist, illegal material or material that violates the right to be free of discrimination for groups protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code;
- may not willfully access any files or content that may damage, compromise, violate, infiltrate or in any way negatively affect HCDSB computers, electronic devices or network or those of other users;
- must not attempt to gain unauthorized access to HCDSB technology or data nor attempt to disrupt or destroy data;
- must not connect any devices, technology or unapproved third-party online services to the HCDSB network;
- may only connect to the HCDSB or Guest network;
- must not use HCDSB-issued credentials to log into tools or services not supported by HCDSB without approval from the Senior Manager of Information Technology;
- will have restricted access to social media platforms on HCDSB Technology unless directed by an educator for educational purposes;

- exception protocols will apply for use of social media for pedagogical or work-related purposes;
- must respect all privacy laws;
- must respect all copyright laws that protect software owners, artists and writers;

Information Technology staff employ the use of tools to monitor and secure internet activity to safeguard the HCDSB, staff and student data and privacy.

Information Technology staff are responsible for ensuring the health and operational capacity of technology, equipment, systems, networks, and other HCDSB technology.

Parents/guardians will be given a notice to sign when students are issued an email address for the first time and be informed as to the platforms the students will be using and have access to. This will be required in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are not permitted the use of personal mobile devices during instructional time, except under the following circumstances:

- for educational purposes only, as directed by an educator
- for health and medical purposes
- to support special education needs

Educators are not to use personal mobile devices during instructional time, unless explicitly for work-related purposes.

All users accept all terms and conditions of the HCDSB network and internet use while on HCDSB property and/or when logging into an HCDSB account.

All users are responsible for:

- ensuring that technology is used in accordance with HCDSB policies and procedures;
- complying with the HCDSB Code of Conduct and Standards of Behaviour;
- ensuring that technology is used to support teaching and learning in accordance with HCDSB teaching and learning expectations;
- using technology in a legal, ethical, safe and responsible manner consistent with the purposes for which it is provided;
- security of their personal network logins and passwords - they should not be shared with anyone other than a parent/guardian (students) or, in some cases, HCDSB personnel, such as but not limited to teachers, administrators, or IT account administrators;
- ensuring that photos, videos or images of an individual/group are not posted online/shared digitally unless consent from the individual(s) – over the age of 18 – or parental consent (for those under the age of 18) has been obtained at the beginning of the school year;
- ensuring that technology is not used for political campaigning or union business unless approved by the Director of Education.

All users must be aware that:

- Information created with HCDSB technology and on HCDSB-managed systems remains the property of and is accessible by the HCDSB; therefore, users should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create store, send or receive using HCDSB technology;
- Any information posted publicly adheres to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA);
- Under MFIPPA, all electronic records are subject to a Freedom of Information request.

### **Remedial Practices and Progressive Discipline**

Individuals who do not comply with this policy will be subject to appropriate consequences consistent with HCDSB policies and procedures related to Codes of Conduct, progressive discipline and the Education Act.

Principals will consider a range of interventions and progressive discipline to address student behaviours within the Education Act and Policy II-39 Progressive Discipline & Safety in Schools Code of Conduct – Suspensions & Expulsions.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following, either singularly or in combination depending on the individual circumstances:

- limitations, suspension and/or revocation of access privileges to personal and HCDSB technology resources;
- for staff, appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including termination for just cause;
- referral to relevant authorities (e.g. police).

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Chair of the Board*