



Niagara Catholic District School Board
***ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
SYSTEMS POLICY (STUDENTS)***

STATEMENT OF POLICY

300 – Schools/Students

Policy No 301.5

Adopted Date: March 28, 2006

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: June 19, 2018

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board (the “Board”), the Board recognizes the educational value of students utilizing electronic communications systems for the purpose of enhancing their learning through the responsible access to global information and communication. The Board further recognizes the critical role that parents play in educating their children on the appropriate use of electronic communication systems and in monitoring their use of these systems.

This partnership of parents and schools is essential in achieving success in ensuring appropriate use of this ever-changing technology.

This policy governs acceptable student use of the internet and electronic resources provided by the Niagara Catholic District School Board in all of its elementary and secondary schools.

For this Policy the term "Electronic communications systems" refers to any electronic means used to send and receive information, including graphic images and photographs. They include, but are not limited to, Internet, Network, Intranet, Cloud, E-Mail, Messaging Service, Social Media, Fax, Telephone, Pagers, Personal Electronic Devices, TV, CD, optical disc media and Radio.

Students are accountable for the appropriate use of the Board’s communication systems in an ethical and appropriate educational manner, which must be in compliance with all relevant federal and provincial legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: the Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario; Ontario Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Ontario Code of Conduct; Ontario Human Rights Code and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and all relevant policies of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

There is no expectation of privacy when communicating using any of the Board’s electronic communication systems.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board recognizes that students may have in their possession personal electronic devices while at school or at school related activities. Students are permitted to bring in personal electronic devices to be used in wireless enabled common areas throughout the school as approved by the administration and in classrooms where approved by the classroom teacher. This policy governs the acceptable use of personal electronic systems by students while at school. The use of these devices are prohibited where they are deemed to interfere with student learning. Academic and administrative staff at the school and/or at the Board level shall determine what, if any, use is interfering with learning.

The Ontario Code of Conduct, Niagara Catholic District School Board Code of Conduct Policy and school Code of Conduct provide disciplinary consequences for students who violate this Policy.

The Director of Education will establish Administrative Procedures for the implementation of this policy.

References:

- [*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*](#)
- [*Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario*](#)
- [*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)
- [*Ontario College of Teachers, Professional Advisory: Maintaining Professionalism-Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media UPDATED, September 2017*](#)
- [*Ontario Human Rights Code*](#)
- [*Provincial Code of Conduct*](#)
- **Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures**
 - [*Safe Schools Policy 302.6*](#)
 - [*Electronic Communications Systems Policy \(Employees\) 201.12*](#)
 - [*Privacy Policy 600.6*](#)
 - [*Diabetes Management Policy 302.8*](#)



Niagara Catholic District School Board
***ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
SYSTEMS POLICY (STUDENTS)***
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

300 – Schools/Students

Policy No 301.5

Adopted Date: March 28, 2006

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: June 19, 2018

In accordance with the Electronic Communications Systems (Students) Policy No. 301.5, all elementary and secondary schools within the Niagara Catholic District School Board will reference the policy in Student Handbooks or Agendas.

DEFINITIONS

1. Electronic communications systems refers to any electronic means used to send and receive information, including graphic images and photographs. They include, but are not limited to, Internet, Intranet, E-Mail, Messaging Services, Social Media, Fax, Telephone, Pagers, Personal Electronic Devices, TV, Optical Disc Media and Radio.
2. Common areas will be defined and outlined by the Principal or person in charge of that building.
3. Personal Electronic Devices are defined as a piece of electronic equipment such as a laptop computer, tablet, mobile phone, wearable technology (e.g. smart watches) and medical monitoring devices (e.g. Wi-Fi enabled blood glucose monitors, etc.).

ETIQUETTE

1. The Niagara Catholic District School Board in keeping with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Ontario Code of Conduct provides safe schools that respect the rights and freedoms of every individual.
2. While security and firewall filters are in place, students are prohibited from knowingly accessing or participating in, but not limited to: religiously, racially, or culturally offensive sites; inappropriate e-mail/text messaging/social media correspondence; commercial, gambling, racist, abusive, profane, pornographic, violent, discriminatory or harassing on-line systems or sites.

RECORDS

All messages sent on Niagara Catholic District School Board communication systems are Board records and the Board reserves the right to access and disclose the content of such messages.

GENERAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

1. Students assume full responsibility for using all Board communication systems in an ethical and appropriate educational manner in compliance with the mission, vision, beliefs and Gospel values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.
2. Students are to obtain permission from a teacher to use Board computer systems.

3. Students are directed to the internet through the Board network system.
4. Students are permitted to bring in personal electronic devices to be used in Board authorized wireless enabled common areas throughout the school as approved by the Principal and in classrooms where approved by the teacher.
5. Students vandalizing, modifying or causing damage to electronic communication systems or computing devices, including software, will be responsible for the full cost to repair or replace hardware or software.
6. Students are prohibited from removing any computer hardware or computer components from its location; attempting to gain unauthorized access to Board electronic communication systems, computing devices, networks or data; accessing any e-mail or download any material that knowingly contains a virus.
7. Students are to adhere to and respect all copyright laws.
8. Students who have permission to post information to the Internet are to have the classroom teacher review the work before it is posted in order to ensure that it is consistent with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
9. Students are to report to their teacher or Principal any abuse of electronic communications systems.
10. The use of Board computers, wireless access and Internet access is a privilege and any breach may result in the closure of user accounts, cancellation of computer and Internet privileges and disciplinary action in accordance with Board Policy and the Code of Conduct.
11. All electronic communications systems, its data and messages generated on or handled by Niagara Catholic equipment are the sole property of the Board and can be traced, viewed and stored.
12. Niagara Catholic staff will notify and fully cooperate with authorities in any investigation relating to activities conducted through the Board's electronic communications systems.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

1. Cell and smart phones, as well as other personal electronic devices, are eligible for appropriate student use in wireless enabled common areas of the schools (at appropriate times and intervals) as approved by the administration of the school for instructional and co-instructional purposes.
2. Cell or smart phones, tablets, laptops, audio or video recording devices are prohibited for use by students in all Niagara Catholic elementary and secondary schools classrooms unless specifically approved by school staff for instructional or co-instructional purposes.
3. The Board and its staff assume no responsibility for the use, safety, security, loss, recovery, repair or replacement of a personal electronic device when carried on to Board premises. The secure storage of these devices is the sole responsibility of the owner/user.

Devices designed to disrupt computing or networking services whether wired or wireless are strictly prohibited.

INAPPROPRIATE/UNACCEPTABLE USE OF THE BOARD'S ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

It is an expectation that students will use Niagara Catholic District School Board electronic communications systems for educational purposes to enhance learning through responsible access to global information and communication.

Students are prohibited from:

INAPPROPRIATE USE	DESCRIPTION
Acting on Behalf of a School or the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Negligent misrepresentations on behalf of a school or the Board or making statements on behalf of a school or the Board when you are not authorized to do so is prohibited.
Chain Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiating or forwarding chain mail is prohibited.
Confidential Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accessing and/or disseminating contact information or confidential information for improper purposes is prohibited.
Controversial Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Users of the internet may occasionally encounter material that is controversial and which other students, parents or staff might consider inappropriate or offensive. ● It is the responsibility of the individual student not to intentionally access such material.
Criminal Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any activity that constitutes a violation of the Criminal Code and/or other laws is prohibited.
Cryptocurrency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cryptocurrency mining or other forms of computing processing power or storage capability mining or exploitation is prohibited.
Defamatory Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making or distributing inappropriate statements about other students, teachers, other staff and/or a school or the Board (defamation and insubordination) is prohibited.
Deliberate Damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliberately causing any physical damage to a Board device.
Disruptive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Usage of devices or technologies which are known to cause or could reasonably be expected to cause service disruption to Board or school electronic communication systems services are strictly prohibited.
Dissemination of any Material that does not Benefit the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disseminating or storing commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, personal promotions, political lobbying, destructive programs (i.e. viruses) or uses of this nature are prohibited.
Hacking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Computer hacking of programs, technology, websites, or personal accounts; even hacking one considers to be “ethical” in nature is prohibited.
Hardware Modification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modification (upgrading or removing) of hardware components and peripherals without authorization. ● Any damages and/or labor charges resulting from unauthorized modifications will be the responsibility of the student or the student’s parents involved.

Hardware Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Movement of hardware and peripherals (from its assigned location in the school) is prohibited without authorization from a Principal.
Identity Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sending email or other electronic communications which hide the identity of the sender or represents the sender as someone else. ● Borrowing, copying or reusing other's information without their consent and/or knowledge.
Inappropriate Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Users of the internet shall not intentionally access inappropriate material on the internet.
Inappropriate Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sending messages, or posting messages on social media, of a bullying, fraudulent, defamatory, discriminating, embarrassing, fraudulent, harassing, intimidating, obscene, profane, sexually explicit, threatening or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate (including graphics) nature is prohibited. ● Users encountering or receiving these kinds of messages or materials should immediately report the incident to their Principal. The Principal, in turn, shall report the incident to the appropriate Superintendent.
Interference of another person's data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Erasing, damaging, or copying files of another user.
Interference with Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using electronic communication systems to distract or interfere with the learning environment;
Manipulation of non-Personal Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manipulating files that are not on a personal account.
Misrepresentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Misrepresenting oneself or the Board while using electronic communications systems;
Personal Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The dissemination of personal information contrary to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act is prohibited.
Pornographic Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Viewing pornographic material is prohibited.
Profiteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using of Board devices, network or internet in order to profit is prohibited
Promotion of Controlled Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encouraging the use of controlled substances or the use of the system for the purpose of inciting crime.
Proprietary Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The dissemination of proprietary information is prohibited.
Software Installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The installation of any software that is not authorized by the Board and for which the Board does not have the appropriate license is strictly prohibited.
Soliciting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Soliciting or advocating non-Board, non-School or personal interests;
Tampering with Settings and/or Configurations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tampering with computer settings, network configurations or desktop settings.
Unauthorized Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attaching unauthorized devices to a computer or network.
Use of Another Person's Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using any other person's account on any system;

Use of Non-Authorized Hardware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Non Board owned hardware and peripherals (excluding external memory cards) may not be physically connected (hard wired) to the network or Internet at any Board site, without the express permission of Family of Schools Superintendents.
Violation of Software Agreements or Copyright Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Violating terms of software licensing agreements and copyright laws;
USB Use Without Permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using external storage devices (i.e. USB devices) without permission;
Use of VPN (Virtual Private Networking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utilizing virtual private networking software or any kind to bypass Board controls and protections;
Any other inappropriate behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performing any other activity using the Board's electronic communication systems that is deemed inappropriate.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Students are to report to their teacher or Principal any abuse of electronic communications systems. Principals will determine the appropriate consequence for students who violate this Electronic Communications (Students) Policy as provided by the Ontario Code of Conduct, the Niagara Catholic District School Board Code of Conduct Policy (Safe Schools) and the school Code of Conduct. Principals will consult with their Family of Schools Superintendent regarding consequences for severe violations of this Policy.