



Social Media Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

Administrative Procedure 1.A.200

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: Policy 1, 2, 3, 16, 17

Legal Reference: Safe Schools Charter, FIFFA, MTS Professional Code of Conduct, Copyright Act (Canada), 1a.030 Code of Conduct, 1a.040 Complaints Against Staff, 1a.090 Information and Communication Technology, 2a.090 Staff Interactions with Students, 1.A.90 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Use

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The School District of Mystery Lake recognizes that parents/guardians communicate regularly through various social media sites. SDML expects parent/guardians to be respectful when using social media and mindful that they have an important responsibility to be good digital citizenship role models to our students and the school communities.

As valuable partners of the SDML community, parents/guardians have a responsibility to engage appropriately with social media when it comes to SDML students and staff.

To this end, we have developed the following guidelines to provide support for parents/guardians when participating in social media activities, e.g. classroom blogs, community Facebook forums, emails, or any other social media platform(s) used by parents/guardians when referencing SDML students and/or staff, either directly, or indirectly, in circumstances where another parent/guardian, staff member, and/or student is identifiable.

Parents/guardians are to set and maintain high ethical standards and to be respectful in their use of social networking. Parental/guardian online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that society expects and appreciates when having face-to-face interactions.

SDML provides the following guidelines to parents/guardians when choosing to use social media.

Parent/Guardian Social Media Guidelines

- Parents/guardians should be familiar with, and adhere to, the terms of use and site specific community standards of the relevant social media platforms/websites. This

includes all federal and provincial copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, and harassment laws; including SDML policies and administrative procedures.

- Parents/guardians are to never use or disclose any confidential information, post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Parents/guardians are to never make disrespectful or offensive comments about students, staff, and other parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should not comment on or forward unsupported information, examples, rumors or comments that might cause damage to SDML students or a staff member's reputation.
- Parents/guardians are to be mindful that, by posting your comments and having online conversations etc. on social media sites, you are broadcasting to the world. Even with the strictest privacy settings, parents/guardians, should be aware that comments expressed in a social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with strict privacy settings.
- Parents/guardians are to never discuss sensitive information about students and/or staff matters with other parents/guardians using social media outlets. As noted above when posting, even on the strictest privacy settings, parents/guardians should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Before posting photographs, and/or videos, permission SHALL be sought from the subjects contained within said material. This is especially the case where photographs and/or videos include other parents/guardians, students, and staff members. No photographs of SDML students without a signed consent form on file.
- Parents/guardians who come across negative remarks and/or postings about SDML students and/or staff members are to share those posts with the school's respective principal.
- Parents/guardians are advised that reports of cyber bullying and other technology abuses may result in notification to the RCMP or other relevant authorities.
- Parents/guardians are to have frequent proactive discussions with their children around their use of technology, the internet, and social media application; including their expectations on how they should act when using social media.
- Parents/guardians are to speak to their children and ensure them that it is safe for them to speak to you when they experience troubles and/or inappropriate social media comments.

SDML Response to Unacceptable Parent/Guardian Social Media Posts

When parents/guardians continue to, following a school/divisional request to cease, make defamatory social media statements about students and/or staff within the context of school-related events or instruction, these comments will be defined as harassment. SDML will send to the parents/guardians a “Cease and Desist” letter.

The “Cease and Desist” letter will warn that if the recipient does not discontinue specified conduct, or take certain actions by a deadline set in the letter, SDML will refer the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

For staff social media guidelines please refer to Administrative Procedure 1.A.90 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Use.

The School District of Mystery Lake would like to issue a sincere thank you to Prairie Rose School Division for the use of information and content from their Social Media Guidelines for Parents/Guardians