

If you are victim of cyberbullying:

- * Make copies of message or capture posted comments /videos;
- * Immediately tell bully to STOP;
- * Tell Principal, call Federation, call police if you worry about your personal safety;
- * Use block sender technology to prevent the person from contacting you again;
- * Contact the platform provider and have the message removed;
- * Visit media-awareness.ca and educate yourself and your students on safe cyber conduct.

If communicating on line, protect yourself:

- * Be aware that electronic communication can generate additional workload;
- * Never use a personal computer account for school communication to parents or students, and exercise caution when using school-based system;
- * Never leave your computer unattended when it is logged into the school district server;
- * Protect your username and password against identity theft, to prevent unauthorized e-mail under your name, or access to school documents;
- * Use intelligent passwords (letters and numbers);
- * Respond to complex messages from parents by telephone or make time for a face-to-face meeting;
- * If possible, limit communication to postings on the school's homework bulletin board site (such as *Test on Tuesday, Assignment due next Wednesday*).

If you must send messages:

- * Always save a copy of the original message;
- * Always use spelling and grammar checks on materials that you plan to e-mail or post on a website;
- * Signatures should include your name, assignment title and school name (not your personal information);
- * Avoid unnecessary attachments;
- * Do NOT write e-mails in capital letters;
- * Never forward a message without permission from the sender first;
- * Always maintain exemplary professional standards when sending e-mail messages to students, parents, colleagues (including friends) and administrators on district equipment.

BE ALERT, AWARE, AND RESPONSIBLE!

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A Union of Professionals

E-Communications Advice from the NBTF



Appropriate and Professional use of :

- E-mail (district or personal)
- Text Messaging
- Internet /Web Surfing
- Chat Rooms
- Instant Messaging
- Blogs
- School Websites
- Bulletin Boards
- Telephone Voice Mail
- Platforms: Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, etc.

NBTF's CONCERNS:

Problems:

- * Lack of privacy or security;
- * Numerous websites that malign teachers;
- * Increasing Spam;
- * Growing incidents of Cyberbullying;
- * Evidence of forged or altered e-mail messages;
- * Evidence of identity of sender disguised;
- * Growing number of messages, videos and postings distributed or copied without permission;
- * Posting of personal information.

Hazards:

- * District or school homework websites;
- * On-line address books;
- * Unauthorized distribution of e-mail addresses;
- * Unreasonable expectations that there will be ongoing communication at all hours by parents, teachers, administration and students;
- * Informal communication may be interpreted as lack of professionalism;
- * Permanent written record of conversations.

Risky behavior:

- * Sending or posting careless messages or messages deemed to be libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene;
- * Visits to websites or platforms deemed inappropriate;
- * Participating in or observing cyberbullying;
- * Using familiar and casual tone in messages to students or parents;

- * Creating or participating in blogs, platforms where personal and intimate information is posted.

ADVICE

- * Always maintain a professional demeanour in all e-communications with students, parents, colleagues and administrators;
- * To chat on-line with students puts you at risk with the employer, Children Protection Services and the police;
- * Read carefully Policy 311 and make sure you understand its restrictions;
- * Do NOT e-mail students. If you do, always maintain professional boundaries with students and avoid communications that could be interpreted as personal;
- * Never use your home/personal computer for contact with parents or students;
- * Have no expectations for privacy in anything you create, store, send or receive on the district's computer system;
- * Sending e-mail messages is like sending a postcard: if you don't want it posted on the bulletin board, then don't send it;
- * Posting personal information on a blog or a platform is like having it published on the front page of the newspaper. All posted material becomes the property of the platform providers - Facebook, etc. (read the terms and conditions);
- * You risk discipline by visiting, creating or participating in websites that are deemed inappropriate.

Communicating with students:

- * Do NOT email students for personal reasons;
- * Avoid a casual familiar tone that can erode boundaries;

- * Never use inappropriate language;
- * Do not comment on student-parent or student-student relationships;
- * Never share or receive personal information;
- * Never chat on-line with strangers or with students.

Communicating with parents:

- * Be aware that your e-mail can be used as evidence of your conduct;
- * Your message may be forwarded to a much wider audience - deliberately or unintentionally;
- * Avoid participating in lengthy e-mail exchanges that consume a lot of time. In addition to adding to your workload, protracted exchanges may be prone to misinterpretation;
- * Never send confidential information by e-mail.

Cyberbullying

- * Electronic social cruelty, prevalent among adolescents;
- * Teachers are sometimes targeted for electronic harassment, including doctored e-mail messages, reconfigured photos or anonymous e-mails that contain insults, threats or sexual innuendo;
- * Many teachers receive unauthorized materials or spam that inundates their system;
- * Allows for participation by an infinite audience.

