

## 411 SOCIAL MEDIA

### Belief

The Maskwacis Education Schools Commission (MESC) follows the cultural and traditional teachings of the Maskwacis Cree, in particular, Wahkohtowin.

Wahkohtowin is the belief that all things are related and connected, that all of existence has spirit and that living in a good way requires us to maintain good relationships with each other and other aspects of existence. We recognize that respect for mother earth, elders, youth, and the Treaties are paramount to planning ahead and making decisions for future generations.

The MESC believes that engaging in digital environments can promote learning, teaching and collaboration for students, employees and parents. The effective use of social media with students both in and out of the classroom can help to create transformative learning environments.

The very nature of social media introduces potential lack of personal control of content and dissemination of content. Due care and attention is required to safeguard privacy. It is important within MESC that Iyiniw Mamtohehikan is taught and upheld in relation to social media and digital citizenship by both employees and students.

### Definitions

“Social media” includes web-based and mobile technologies that turn communication into interactive dialogue. Some examples include but are not limited to: personal websites, micro-blogs, blogs, wikis, podcasts, digital images and video and other social media technologies.

“Digital Citizenship” is defined as the norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour with regard to technology use, as defined at [www.digitalcitizenship.com](http://www.digitalcitizenship.com):

- Treating others with dignity and respect
- Respecting the privacy of others
- Respecting others by refraining from using profane or abusive language
- Respecting others by refraining from posting or storing any content that contains sexual, racial, religious, or ethnic slurs, any other form of abuse, or that contains threatening or otherwise offensive language or pictures.
- Protecting your own personal information from unknown or non-understood online environments, agencies or individuals
- Only engaging in online financial transactions with known agencies, and only then via secure means.

- Respecting others by refraining from actions that are malicious or harmful to them
- Respecting copyright
- Respecting and abiding by Canadian law, whether Federal, Provincial, Municipal or other statute.
- Respecting the laws or rules of any other state, international agency or organization with whom you interact
- Ensuring you are authorized to access resources either inside or outside of MESCC's network prior to accessing them.
- Refraining from sending files or messages designed to disrupt other computer systems or networks.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Personal Responsibility**

- 1.1. All users are personally responsible for the content/information they publish online.
- 1.2. Online behaviour shall reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration used when meeting face to face. In addition, online behaviour shall adhere to the principles of Digital Citizenship.
- 1.3. Photographs must respect the person's right to privacy and reflect appropriate content for the educational purpose.
- 1.4. Social media used for educational purposes is an extension of the classroom. What is inappropriate in the classroom or workplace is also deemed inappropriate online.
- 1.5. All employees and employees, whether permanent or contracted are to act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- 1.6. Employees are responsible for moderating all content published on all social media technologies related to classroom work.
- 1.7. Employees shall refrain from posting any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.

### **2. Copyright and Fair Use**

- 2.1. All users must respect federal copyright and fair use guidelines.
- 2.2. Hyperlink content must be appropriate and educationally beneficial.
- 2.3. External hyperlinks must be identified and respect copyright law. Plagiarism is an academic offence.

### **3. Profiles and Identity**

- 3.1. No identifying information about students is to be posted; for example, last names, addresses or phone numbers are not to appear on social media sites. Posting of confidential or personal student information as defined in the PIPA Act is prohibited.

- 3.2. Where social media is managed by teachers/instructors, they are responsible for monitoring content that may identify students.
4. Any use of social media accounts that are created by employees for the sole purpose in their role with MESC, e.g. Twitter accounts, class Facebook pages, class blogs, etc., are not to be used for personal matters.
  - 4.1. Upon request, for these specific accounts, login information with written consent to access the account must be given to the Principal.
  - 4.2. Prior to using social media accounts for school/classroom purposes, all users are to review MESC Social Media Guidelines (Appendix).

#### References

AP 134

AP 138

Personal Information Protection Act

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Alberta Human Rights Act

Canadian Criminal Code

Copyright Act

## **APPENDIX: SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

### Employees Guidelines

1. Personal Responsibility
  - 1.1. MESC employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
  - 1.2. Your online behaviour is to reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
  - 1.3. Remember that blogs, wikis and podcasts are an extension of your classroom. What is inappropriate in your classroom is to be deemed inappropriate online.
  - 1.4. When contributing online do not post confidential student information.
2. Respect copyright and fair use guidelines.
3. Personal Use of Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.
  - 3.1. MESC employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time— protect your privacy.
  - 3.2. Your online behaviour is to reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional standards. When using social media, the world is your classroom. Speak as if you were speaking to students.
  - 3.3. “Friending” students or parents on Facebook is not encouraged. With that being said, using Facebook Groups or Fan Pages is a great way to connect with students in this space without having to ‘friend’ them.
  - 3.4. By posting your comments and having online conversations etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what you ‘say’ online is to be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a ‘private conversation’ may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
  - 3.5. Comments related to MESC or a school are to always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even in the strictest settings, employees are to act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
  - 3.6. Before posting photographs and videos, permission is to be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.

- 3.7. Before posting personal photographs, thought is to be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
  - 3.8. Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and by that token an extension of your professional life and your classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the classroom wall – is it really correct to put it online?
  - 3.9. Comments made using Twitter are public and are visible to those who do not have Twitter accounts in most cases. Employees are to be aware of the public and widespread nature and ensure that they are not posting any items that would be deemed inappropriate.
4. Social Media Guidelines for Students
- 4.1. Be aware of what you post online. Social media venues including wikis, blogs, photo and video sharing sites are very public. What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you wouldn't want friends, enemies, parents, teachers/instructors, or a future employer to see.
  - 4.2. Follow the Student Code of Conduct when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.
  - 4.3. Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birth dates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teacher/instructors and parents.
  - 4.4. Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas is recommended. However, be sure to read the entire article prior to linking to ensure that all information is appropriate for a school setting.
  - 4.5. Do your own work. Do not use other people's intellectual property without their permission. It is a violation of copyright law to copy and paste other's thoughts. When paraphrasing another's idea(s) be sure to cite your source with the URL. It is good practice to hyperlink to your sources.
  - 4.6. Be aware that pictures may also be protected under copyright laws.
  - 4.7. How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
  - 4.8. Blog and wiki posts are to be well written. Follow writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.

- 4.9. If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher/instructor right away.
- 4.10. Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or access to future use of online tools.