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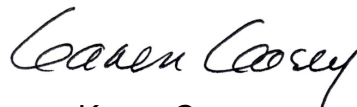
August 20, 2008

### **Public School Network Access and Use Policy**

The Minister of Education has approved the attached revised Public School Network Access and Use Policy, effective September 1, 2008.

This new policy incorporates revisions made following the regular review of the Public School Network Access and Use Policy (2006).

Each school board is required to implement a policy that is consistent with the provincial policy.



Karen Casey  
Minister of Education

*Recipients of this release are asked to convey its contents to all of their staff members for whom the information is relevant.*



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## PUBLIC SCHOOL NETWORK ACCESS AND USE POLICY

This policy replaces the *Public School Network Access and Use Policy (2006)*.

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Approval Date:

Approved by:

Effective by: September 1, 2008

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### 1 POLICY STATEMENT

Students in public schools in Nova Scotia will use information from a variety of sources, including the Internet, to support and extend their learning as prescribed in the *Public School Programs*. School Board Staff will use public school Networks to fulfill requirements of their employment and for professional development. Access and use of Networks will allow Users to access local, national, and international electronic information sources, and to collaborate with peers and experts. Access to information, collaboration and creation of digital resources are vital to intellectual inquiry. This policy is intended to provide a balance between access and risk.

### 2 DEFINITIONS

In this Policy,

**Consent** means written informed consent in advance by the parent or legal guardian of Users under 19 years of age or by Users themselves if 19 years of age or over.

**Department** means the Nova Scotia Department of Education;

**EDnet** means a wide area network that provides data communications services to schools, libraries and related institutions for connection to the public Internet, online education and administrative applications;

**Individually Identifiable Information** means names, addresses, and/or images of one or more persons;

**Internet** means the public Internet;

**Intranet** means private networks that are not accessible to the general public except by those who are authorized to have access;

**Network** means any or all of a public school system local area network, EDnet, or the Internet;

**Policy** means this Public School Network Access and Use Policy;

**School Board Staff** means all employees of a school board;

**School Board Policy** means the school board policy respecting public school Network access and use;

**User** means any School Board Staff, student, board member, parent, volunteer, or school advisory council member, or any other person given authorized access to a Network in respect of the provision of the public school program.

### **3 POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this Policy are to

- provide guidelines for the use of Networks by Users
- ensure that Users have information which encourages them to respect privacy, copyright, and intellectual property of others
- clarify responsibilities related to Network use in public schools
- ensure that Networks and associated technology are used for intended purposes
- provide guidelines to respond to inappropriate uses
- balance access and risk

### **4 APPLICATION**

This Policy applies to all Users of the Network.

### **5 POLICY DIRECTIVES**

Every school board will develop or revise and publish a School Board Policy that is consistent with this Policy for all schools under its management and control. School boards will distribute the School Board Policy to those served by each school board and the Corporate Policy Branch of the Department.

### **6 POLICY GUIDELINES**

With the guidance and instruction of teachers, student Users may retrieve, process, create, communicate, and evaluate digital information to pursue the curriculum outcomes of the *Public School Programs* of Nova Scotia.

It is expected that student Users will access teacher-previewed, recommended, or evaluated information systems and sources in structured ways for instructional and curriculum purposes. It is expected that student Users will access other sources in accordance with the Policy.

Network services will be available to School Board Staff.

## **7 ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **The Department is responsible for**

- communicating this Policy to each School Board
- managing the EDnet network in accordance with this Policy

### **The School Board is responsible for**

- developing, implementing, and enforcing a School Board Policy for Users, consistent with this Policy
- informing Users about the School Board Policy, and the School Board's roles and responsibilities in the implementation and maintenance of the School Board Policy
- providing professional development opportunities to help teachers integrate online services including the Internet within the curriculum
- ensuring that use of Networks is consistent with the School Code of Conduct
- ensuring that unacceptable conduct is addressed according to the School Code of Conduct
- facilitating set-up of Network access accounts for student Users, teachers, and school staff

### **The School is responsible for**

- complying and ensuring compliance with the School Board Policy
- communicating with student Users, School Board Staff and parents, the purposes, benefits, and risks associated with the use of Network resources
- maintaining records respecting Consent to post Individually Identifiable Information
- ensuring that the terms of license agreements between software vendors and the school are observed
- facilitating staff development related to Network access and curriculum use

### **The Teacher is responsible for**

- the overall management of student use of a Network within their assigned teaching areas or when acting in a supervisory role; and instructing students on the appropriate use of the Network, including but not limited to:
  - providing students with clear direction and expectations of compliance with the School Board Policy
  - ensuring that the use of Networks is consistent with curriculum outcomes of the *Public School Programs*
  - previewing and evaluating learning resources including Internet sites prior to recommending them for student use
  - directing students to previewed and recommended Internet resources integrated within the curriculum and instructional program
  - supervising student access to Networks

- informing students about and modelling good behaviour regarding copyright and intellectual property
- alerting students to the dangers of making available Individually Identifiable Information over the Internet
- complying with the School Board Policy

**The Student is responsible for**

- following the School Board Policy as part of a planned curriculum learning activity
- using Networks in accordance with the School Code of Conduct
- reporting immediately to the teacher or other authority any inappropriate content or communication that makes the student feel uncomfortable
- reporting immediately to the teacher or other authority attempts by someone unknown to the student to arrange a meeting with the student

**All Users are responsible for**

- using Networks in accordance with school board policies and procedures and relevant federal and provincial laws
- using the Network in a responsible and ethical manner consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which it is provided
- using only those facilities for which they have authorization, whether these facilities are located at the public school or at any other location
- exercising caution when releasing Individually Identifiable Information to any person or electronic system
- posting only with Consent Individually Identifiable Information of other persons where it can be viewed over the Internet
- not using technology at any location for purposes of bullying or harassing
- not causing disruption of Networks
- not attempting to access private or personal materials, information, or files of others without their prior authorization
- not vandalizing, damaging, or disabling the work of another individual or organization
- not accessing, manipulating, altering or attempting to damage, disable, or destroy technology or computer files belonging to others
- not accessing, creating, or distributing harassing, pornographic, obscene, racist, sexually explicit, or threatening material, imagery or language
- installing only authorized software
- using Networks only for non-commercial, legal purposes, and for public school system purposes

**8 CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE USE**

A student User who violates this Policy or a School Board Policy is subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures and School Code of Conduct.

School Board Staff who violate this Policy or a School Board Policy are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including discharge.

As a result of such violations, Users may lose access to Networks.

When appropriate, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

## **9 MONITORING**

The Deputy Minister of Education is responsible for monitoring overall compliance with this Policy.

The superintendent of each school board is responsible for monitoring compliance with this Policy and the School Board Policy.

The principal of each school is responsible for compliance with the School Board Policy.

The Director, Learning Resources and Technology Services, shall monitor the implementation of this Policy. This responsibility includes evaluating the suitability and effectiveness of this Policy and ensuring that the Policy is formally reviewed at least every two years.

## **10 REFERENCES**

School Code of Conduct  
Nova Scotia Government Website Privacy Policy  
Integration of Information and Communication Technology within the Curriculum  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the FOIPOP Act)  
Personal Information International Disclosure Protection Act  
Copyright Act  
Criminal Code

## **11 ENQUIRIES**

All enquiries, requests, or comments should be forwarded to the  
Director, Learning Resources and Technology Services  
Department of Education  
PO Box 578, 2021 Brunswick Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 2S9  
e-mail [lrt@ednet.ns.ca](mailto:lrt@ednet.ns.ca)

## Appendix A

### Sample Consent Form Student Image(s)/Student Work

We believe strongly in the need to protect all students and recognize the issues around the publishing of student images, especially on the public Internet. We do however believe that the showcasing of students, and their work and achievements, can be an important part of school life and can be a very positive experience for students. It is the policy of the XXX School Board to have parental / guardian / consenting User's (if 19 years of age or over) permission before any images of students or student work is used.

During the school year, photographs may be taken of students as a part of a curricular project, to promote an event in our school, or to showcase student achievement. To promote school events or the achievements of our students, the school and/or school board may use images of students or student work in various publications, including newsletters, news releases, and on school or school board web pages that may be viewed over the Internet.

I understand that by signing this form that [name of school] has asked my permission to post photos of [student name] online.

I consent to the following:

The school or school board may publish images of [insert student name] in  yes  no  
print or on the school or school board website.

The school or school board may publish the work of [insert student name] in  yes  no  
print or on the school or school board website.

I understand that the image(s) is accessible to anyone who has access to the Internet. A copyright notice prohibiting the copying of an image of a student or student work without written permission of the school or school board will be posted on the website.

I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of parent / guardian / consenting student if 19 years of age or over)

of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

do hereby give consent to \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of school)

to approve the release of images or student work as outlined above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent / guardian / consenting student if 19 years of age or over)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)