

NLSchools refers to all public K-12 English schools and school-related facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Education Operations Branch and all employees working therein providing services and supports to such schools, including those who work in the areas of school facilities, student transportation, program implementation, student services, and procurement.

Policy Name

Social Media Use

Policy Statement

The Department of Education values open dialogue and recognizes that the use of social media is now an essential tool for engaging with stakeholders. The department promotes responsible digital citizenship and is committed to supporting all users to respectfully interact for teaching and learning purposes, to discuss topics and to share information related to education and our public school system.

Background

The department recognizes that social media is a tool which can further enhance teaching and learning in our schools and our communication with parents or guardians and the public. The use of social media in an educational context should be undertaken in a manner which respects all students and staff.

The department recognizes its role in setting the direction for proper social media use and providing guidance to students and staff on its use and potential consequences for doing so inappropriately. This policy and related guidelines are intended to outline the appropriate use of social media and expectations for all users within NLSchools

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, students and volunteers in schools and school-related facilities within NLSchools.

Definitions

Social Media

Social media refers to publicly-accessible Government of Newfoundland and

Labrador and third-party-hosted social media sites. This includes social networks, video and photo file sharing, social bookmarking, blogs, micro-blogs, podcasting, wikis and other similar tools. It refers to freely accessible online social media tools used to produce, post and interact using text, images, video, and audio to communicate, share, collaborate, or network.

Personal Information

Personal information is defined in the [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(ATIPPA\)](#) and includes recorded information about an identifiable individual such as name, address, educational and employment history, and family status. Recorded images (e.g photographs) are considered personal information.

Policy Directives

1. School Administrators and teaching staff are encouraged to use new and modern technology to make the teaching and learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable, and can use social media tools to teach curriculum and support students. The school administrator/ manager at schools and school-related facilities has the final authority for the use of social media platforms. The type and use of social media tools will vary, and some sites may be blocked, others fully accessible, and others still could be solely accessible for classroom work, as requested by subject/classroom teachers.
2. All users are reminded that conduct via social media may reflect on the reputation of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. All users are expected to use social media in a responsible, legal and ethical manner, in accordance with this policy and associated guidelines and terms of reference, as well as other policies including, but not limited to, NLSchools [Acceptable Use of Technology](#) policy, and all applicable federal and provincial laws.
3. Inappropriate use of social media tools by students that impacts adversely on the school environment in general, may be subject to further action. Such use may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including suspension or expulsion.
4. Inappropriate use of social media tools by employees which impacts adversely on the school environment in general, may also be subject to further action, up to and including termination of employment.
5. School grounds and classrooms are not public venues. Photographing or videotaping students or staff on school grounds or at other worksites, and posting the photos or videos to social media sites such as Facebook, is not permitted, except where an event is a public event (i.e. members of the public and media are allowed to attend) or where consent has been provided.

6. While it is not the intention of NLSchools to monitor the social media presence of students and staff, when situations arise or are brought to its attention, school administrators and other staff are expected to proceed in accordance with NLSchools policy and guidelines.