Toronto Secondary Unit Electronic Social Media Policy

December 10, 2019

Toronto Secondary Unit
Ontario English Catholic
Teachers' Association

1 POLICY

1.01 The Toronto Secondary Unit recognizes social media as a valuable tool to provide resources and information to members, promote and publicize the activities of the Unit, and act as a forum for meaningful discussion between the Unit and its members.

1.02 Members entrust the Toronto Secondary Unit to act in a manner that promotes Catholic values and builds solidarity through actions that foster trust and collegiality, aligning with OECTA's electronic social media policy and the OCT's Professional Advisory on Social Media. The Toronto Secondary Unit (TSU) recognizes that inappropriate social media use by its Executive members on official TSU accounts effects this trust. Users should be aware that social media postings may become public beyond its intended recipients.

1.03 The Toronto Secondary Unit, through the Unit President, and designated individuals, will use social media for Unit purposes only when authorized to do so, as outlined in this policy.

2 PURPOSE

2.01 The goal of this policy is to guide the Unit, the authorized Unit spokesperson (the President), Executive members, and authorized designates in the effective and acceptable use of social media and to set expectations for appropriate social media use.

2.02 The President of the Unit is the official spokesperson of the Unit. Certain other persons, as authorized by the President, may be permitted to contribute to social media on behalf of the Unit.

2.03 The aims of this policy are:

a) to protect the reputation of the Unit, its members, staff and associates, and social media communities at large, from irresponsible or illegal activities.
b) to ensure privacy, security and reliability of the Unit's social media tools;
c) to provide a general definition of appropriate and acceptable social media use;
d) to outline procedures for identifying and handling inappropriate usage.

3 SCOPE

3.01 This policy refers to freely accessible social media Internet tools, including blogs, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), RSS feeds, videos or photo-sharing sites (e.g., Flickr), and other similar tools where the Unit has established an official presence.

3.02 The President and/or authorized designates will review and communicate all social media platforms where the unit has an official presence at the start of each school year. Changes to approved social media accounts must be authorized by the President and communicated to the 1st Vice President/Communications Officer, the Chair of Communications, the Executive, and any authorized designates.

3.03 This policy applies to members elected to the Executive and any individual who is authorized as a designate to contribute to social media on behalf of the Unit.

4 RESPONSIBILITY

4.01 Use of Social Media – As An Authorized Designate

Certain individuals will be authorized to post content on social media platforms, with the role of contributing to social media discussions on behalf of the Unit. Authorized individuals will include the Unit spokesperson (the President), or any other authorized person designated, in writing, by the President.

4.02 When contributing to social media on behalf of the Unit, authorized persons will not use personal social media tools for Unit purposes. Authorized persons will only use social media platforms where the Unit has an official presence.

4.03 Authorized persons must receive Unit approved training on how to represent the Unit in the online realm. Training will reinforce how to differentiate between the individual's views and the views of the Unit. Training may be provided by the OECTA Communications Department.

4.04 When using social media for Unit purposes, authorized persons must not use social media in a way that could harm the reputation of the Unit. As authorized designates, the ideas, values, or opinions expressed in their contributions to social media must be aligned with the views of the Unit.

4.05 Authorized persons must not use social media to create, transmit, distribute, store, or share anything that:

a) infringes any copyright, trademark, trade secret, or other intellectual property right;
b) is considered obscene, pornographic or would otherwise be seen as objectionable;
c) is libellous, defamatory, hateful, or constitutes a threat, personal attack, or abuse;
d) encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offence or give rise to liability;
e) harasses the receiver, whether through language, frequency, or length of messages;
f) forges, conceals, or misrepresents the sender's identity (authorized designates must use their real name at all times when using social media for Unit purposes);
g) divulges private, personal, sensitive and/or confidential information related to the Unit's activities (e.g., collective bargaining), its members or its employees;
h) violates any of the Unit's policies in the OECTA Handbook, OECTA Policies and Procedures Manual, and TSU Bylaws, TSU/OECTA Harassment and Discrimination Policy and OCT Standards of Practice.

4.06 In situations where an authorized person is unsure if a particular social media contribution will contravene any section of this policy, the designate will consult the Communications Officer and/or the President for clarification.

4.07 Appropriate social media use, for Unit purposes, will be knowledgeable, purposeful, and consistent with one or more of the following objectives:

a) Promotes the role and activities of the Unit and OECTA;
b) Provides useful information to members about the Unit, OECTA, academic/professional matters, or other topics of relevance to members;
c) Shares views, positions, or opinions of the Unit and/or OECTA on relevant matters while maintaining a non-partisan, non-political stance;
d) Engages the Unit in a meaningful dialogue with members, relevant Unit stakeholders, and the public.

4.08 Use of Social Media – As A Private Individual

In their capacity as private individuals, members elected to the Executive, Unit employees and other authorized persons are entitled to the same free speech rights as any other individual in Canada. However, they must not speak on behalf of the Unit when using social media for their personal uses.

4.09 Members elected to the Executive, Unit employees, or other authorized persons expressing personal opinions on social media sites must clearly state that their contributions reflect their own personal views, not the views of the Unit.

4.10 Acting as a private citizen, executive members, employees, and other authorized persons must list their personal email address where applicable on social media sites, not their Unit email address.

4.11 Acting as a private citizen, employees will not use their official Unit position title on personal social media sites.

4.12 The TSU 1st Vice President, as per bylaw 1.2.7.6 (d)(i) is responsible for monitoring social media sites where the Unit has an official presence, and ensuring that they are being used in accordance with this policy.

4.13 The TSU 1st Vice President, as per bylaw 1.2.7.6 (d)(i), along with the President, are authorized to remove any postings or links on official Unit social media sites that are considered to be inappropriate or outside of legal or ethical boundaries.

4.14 Distribution
The TSU President will provide a copy of this policy to all authorized designates.

5 PROCEDURE

5.01 Any individual who feels that social media sites of the Unit are being used inappropriately may report their complaint to the President, in confidence.