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**Rationale:**

Island Catholic Schools (ICS) realizes that contemporary life requires adapting to ever changing methods of communication. Employees, contractors, students and parents (including Local School Council, Parent Group, School Committees) involved with Island Catholic Schools also have a responsibility to engage appropriately with Social Media that is linked to the schools. Policy exists for the appropriate use of Social Media by employees, contractors, students and parents.

Island Catholic Schools fully respects the legal rights of its employees. Activities in or outside of work that affect your image as a Catholic school teacher, the image of the school, your job performance, the performance of others, or Island Catholic Schools' business interests are a proper focus for company policy.

Likewise what contractors, students and parents post on Social Media that reflects on the school, employees, contractors, students and/or parents of the school are a proper focus for ICS policy.

ICS has developed policy and guidelines to provide direction for employees, contractors, students and parents when participating in Social Media activities (i.e. class blogs, school FaceBook pages, emails or other Social Media platforms used in connection with the school either directly, or indirectly in circumstances where the school, employee, contractor, students and/or parents of the school are identifiable.

ICS encourages employees, contractors, students and parents to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking. Be respectful of others; posts should help build and support the school community. Online behavior is as important as face-to-face interactions and should reflect standards of honesty and respect.

**Policy:**

Island Catholic School employees, contractors, students and parents are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs or any other form of user-generated media. Employees, contractors, students and parents must be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time; protect your own privacy and the privacy of others.

The Island Catholic Schools trusts, and expects its employees, contractors, students and parents to exercise personal responsibility whenever they participate in social media. This includes not violating the trust of those with whom they are engaging.

School social media accounts associated with the school must be approved by the Principal with login and passwords stored in the school office.



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**Guidelines:**

1. Identify yourself—name and, when relevant, role at Island Catholic Schools—if you discuss Island Catholic Schools or school-related matters. Write in the first person and make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Island Catholic Schools.
2. If you publish content to a blog or website and it is related to work/activities you do or subjects associated with Island Catholic Schools, use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Island Catholic Schools' positions or opinions."
3. Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
4. Don't provide Island Catholic Schools' or another's confidential or other proprietary information. Ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to Island Catholic Schools.
5. Don't cite or reference employees, contractors, students, parents, partners or suppliers without their approval. When you do make a reference (with their approval), where possible link back to the source.
6. Respect your audience. Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in Island Catholic Schools (workplace). You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
7. Be aware of your association with Island Catholic Schools in social networks. If you identify yourself as an employee, contractor, student, or parent of Island Catholic Schools, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and customers.
8. Be the first to correct your own mistakes, and don't alter previous posts without indicating that you have done so.
9. Always add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective. The Island Catholic Schools' image is best represented by its people and what you publish may reflect on the Island Catholic Schools' image.

**Island Catholic Schools supports open dialogue and the exchange of ideas.**

Island Catholic Schools regards blogs and other forms of online discourse as primarily a form of communication and relationship building among individuals. When the organization wishes to communicate publicly it has well established means to do so. *Only those officially designated by the Island Catholic Schools have the authorization to speak on behalf of ICS.* (This is typically the Bishop, Superintendent, and/or Principal).

**Be who you are.** Some bloggers work anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Island Catholic Schools discourages that in blogs or other forms of online participation that relate to our schools or issues with which the organization is engaged.



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We believe in transparency and honesty. Nothing gets you more notice in the online social media environment than honesty—or dishonesty. Be careful to protect yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be judicious in disclosing personal details.

**Be thoughtful about how you present yourself in online social networks.** The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in social networks. By virtue of identifying yourself as an Island Catholic School employee, contractor, student and/or parent within a social network, you are now connected to others. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your activities at the Island Catholic Schools.

**Speak in the first person.** Use your own voice; bring your own personality to the forefront; say what is on your mind.

**Use a disclaimer.** Whether you publish to a blog or some other form of social media, make it clear that what you say there is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of Island Catholic Schools. At a minimum in your own blog, you should include the following standard disclaimer: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Island Catholic Schools' position or opinions."

**Respect copyright and fair use laws.** For Island Catholic Schools' protection as well as your own, it is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, including Island Catholic Schools' own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work. And it is good general blogging practice to link to others' work.

**Protecting confidential and proprietary information.** Social media blurs many of the traditional boundaries between internal and external communications. Be thoughtful about what you publish. You must make sure you do not disclose or use Island Catholic Schools' confidential or proprietary information or that of any other person or company in any social media platform. For example, ask permission before posting someone's picture in a social network or publishing a conversation that was meant to be private.

**Protect Island Catholic Schools' employees, students, parents, stakeholders, partners and suppliers.** Employees, students, partners or suppliers should not be cited or referenced without their approval. Never identify an employee, student, partner or supplier by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of an employee's, contractor's, student's or parent's engagement. If an individual hasn't given explicit permission for their name to be used, think carefully about the content you're going to publish and get the appropriate permission where necessary.



**Respect your audience and your others.** Remember that the Island Catholic Schools’ employees and stakeholders reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don’t be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. If your blog is self-hosted, use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the views of the Island Catholic Schools. Further, blogs, virtual worlds, social networks, or other tools should not be used for internal communications among employees. It is fine for Island Catholic Schools employees and contractors to disagree, but don’t use your blog or other social media to air your differences in an inappropriate manner.

**Add value.** The Island Catholic Schools’ brand is best represented by its people and everything you publish reflects upon it. Blogs and social networks should be used in a way that adds value to the Island Catholic Schools’ image. If it helps you, your coworkers, our stakeholders or our partners to do their jobs; if it contributes to the improvement of the Island Catholic Schools; then it is adding value.

**Use your best judgment.** Remember that there are always consequences to what you publish. If you’re about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, review the suggestions above and think about why that is. Ultimately, however, you have sole responsibility for what you post to your blog or publish in any form of social media.

Reference:	Approved
	Date Approved: March 2013
Cross-reference: Polices 613 - 616	Date(s) Revised: January 30, 2018