



## Social Media, Cell Phone, and Sexual Harassment Policy

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*"The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more St. Paul's exclamation: 'Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel,'"* the Pope said in his message for the 2010 celebration of World Communications Day. Because we recognize the influence of technology in our students' lives, we cannot ignore it, but must ensure, to the best of our ability, that it is used in a manner in line with Catholic social teaching.

Parents and students must become well versed in our Social Media and Student Cell Phone Policy so that there is clarity of expectations, limitations, and boundaries. If the policy is not respected, and trust is broken, disciplinary actions will occur according to school policy. Disciplinary actions may include the following:

- o Students surrender the electronic device in question.
- o Students may be suspended.
- o Expulsion or a report to the authorities may occur.

### Cell Phone Policy

Cell phone use of any kind is not permitted during the school day or after school events that occur on school grounds unless express permission is granted for a one-time situation by the adult in charge.

#### **If a student must bring a cell phone to school:**

- It is to be stored in their locker until they pack to leave school grounds. In the event that there is an emergency, or significant reason for a student to use their cell phone after school hours, they may do so with the direct permission of the adult in charge. With permission, students are to use school land-lines during the school day.
- **Cell phones that come on school property are not considered private** while on school grounds and may be confiscated and searched if there is reason to believe that the Social Media and Student Cell Phone Policy has been broken.
- Should a cell phone be confiscated on school grounds out of concern that the student has been involved in cyberbullying or the harassment of another student or staff member, **students will be required to provide access to accounts** for a search.
- Use of cell phones for social media purposes, **whether on or off school grounds**, that creates a hostile environment interfering with education will be investigated and the appropriate action taken by administration.
- **Should a social media message that occurred outside of school hours affect the ability of teachers to teach, or affect the ability of students to learn, the cell phone in question will be confiscated and searched.**
- Should a student decide to use their cell phone during the school day, it will be confiscated and given to the principal until the close of the school day. The first offense is a conduct slip, the second offense will require that a parent come to the school office to retrieve the phone and the student will receive detention. Additional offenses will follow the school discipline policy and may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

## **Social Media Policy**

- Epiphany School considers social media bullying (cyber-bullying) to be a serious matter that can cause great harm. Cyber-bullying that involves Epiphany students should be reported to the principal who will proceed with the investigation and if necessary, report the incident to officials.
- Students are prohibited from accessing social media on a school or personal technology device; this includes while at school or while at home learning.
- **While away from Epiphany school, students who participate in online interactions must remember that their social media conduct and posts reflect on, and may affect, the entire Epiphany community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards as set forth in the school discipline policy.**
- Students who participate in social media phenomenon that can be harmful spiritually, socially, or emotionally to younger or more vulnerable children are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in this policy.
- To protect the privacy of Epiphany students and employees, students may not create digital photos, video, or audio recordings of Epiphany community members either on-campus or off-campus for online publications or distribution without the knowledge and consent of those being recorded or photographed.
- Students must be aware that social media leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Students should not post anything they do not want fellow students, friends, parents, teachers or future employers to see.
- Personal information, including last names, phone numbers, addresses, birth dates and pictures should not be provided.
- Students may not use, copy, or share other people's ideas, thoughts, property, or work online without the author's permission. This is a violation of copyright law.
- Students may not misrepresent themselves by using someone else's name or picture.
- Students may not use another student's password or access their accounts.
- Students may not use social media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about Epiphany community members, athletic or academic contest rivals, or any individual or group.
- Failure to comply with the Social Media or Cell Phone Policy will result in the following consequences:
  - Students may have to turn over the electronic devices in question and relinquish all passwords to the school administration for a search.
  - Students may be suspended.
  - If found guilty of allegations, the student may be expelled.

## **Social Media Parent Expectations:**

1. Parents are urged to discuss this Social Media Policy with their children, emphasizing that cyber-bullying to any member of the Epiphany community, on or off school property, will have serious consequences as noted above.
2. Parents must respect directives initiated by the administration to remove photos, documents, comments, data, or links that are determined to be detrimental to the integrity of Epiphany Catholic School or community.
3. Parents have the right to request any personal information on the Internet about their child be removed.
4. Failure to comply with a request or demand from Epiphany Catholic School Administrators may, depending on the circumstances, require law enforcement intervention.

## **Posting Images and Personal Information Policy**

If posting material about Epiphany Catholic School, participants agree not to:

- Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, employees, parents, volunteers, or any other person other than yourself.
- Post material that Epiphany administration determines threatening, harassing, obscene, defamatory, or hostile towards any Epiphany individual or entity.
- Post disparaging comments about Epiphany under multiple names or aliases.

### *Sexual Harassment Policy*

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, posting imagery or language that is sexually offensive, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature which interferes with an individual's education, or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive learning environment. Sexual harassment may be directed to members of the same or opposite sex.

Sexual Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Teasing or joking of a sexual nature, sexual name-calling, making references to past or present sexual activity, spreading sexual rumors, or making derogatory or dehumanizing sexual remarks
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- Intentional brushing against a person's body
- Display of offensive pictures, posters or other graphics
- Leering, inappropriate patting or pinching, and other forms of unwelcome touching
- Otherwise creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment
- Any electronic messages, imagery, or language related to any of the above; regardless of whether it occurs in or outside of school.

Any member of the school community who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment is encouraged to report the situation immediately to the administration. All complaints of harassment will be handled promptly and thoroughly.

Should an Epiphany Catholic School student be found guilty of sexual harassment on or off school grounds, in person, on a cell phone or computer, or through a communication portal such as a gaming device, there will be swift consequences that may include suspension, expulsion, and/or a report to the authorities.