



## **Background**

This procedure outlines the acceptable use of computer devices and technical equipment at the Portage la Prairie School Division, including Personal Mobile Devices (PMD). It applies to all end users. It applies to all equipment used within the Portage la Prairie School Division and the Network System of the Portage la Prairie School Division itself. End users include employees, students, and guests. This procedure is informed in part by the direction of Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning's "Enhancing Guidelines for Cell Phone Use in Schools to Minimize Distractions and Support Student Learning and Safety" from August 2024.

## **General Use and Ownership of Divisional Technology and Networks**

Portage la Prairie School Division offers employees, students, and other authorized users (as determined by the technology department and school and department administrators) access to various information technology resources, including computer workstations, local area networks, a wide area network, and the Internet.

In response to the privilege of accessing the Internet, every Internet user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user on the Internet and act responsibly, ethically, and legally.

**Responsible use** of information technology includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Use consistent with the mission of the Portage la Prairie School Division.
- Use that encourages efficient, cooperative, and creative methods to perform the user's job duties or educational tasks.
- Use related to instructional, administrative, and other support activities considered consistent with the division's mission.

All educators are responsible for working together to help students develop the skills needed to discriminate among information sources, identify information appropriate to student age and development levels, and evaluate and use information to meet students' educational goals.

Electronic information research skills are fundamental to preparing citizens and future employees who are good digital citizens. Staff will blend thoughtful use of such information throughout the curriculum and provide guidance and instruction to students in appropriately using such resources.

Students are responsible for good behaviour on school computer networks, just like in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for

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behaviour and communication apply. The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others, and students must act in a considerate and responsible manner when using technology in schools.

Use of the Internet, Division computer networks, and computer workstations is a privilege that may be revoked for abusive conduct.

It should further be noted that:

- (a) All data created on the Portage la Prairie School Division systems remains the property of the Portage la Prairie School Division. Because of the need to secure and protect Portage la Prairie School Division’s network, the administration cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information stored on any network device belonging to Portage la Prairie School Division.
- (b) For security and network maintenance purposes, authorized individuals may monitor equipment systems and network traffic at any time.
- (c) Portage la Prairie School Division reserves the right to audit networks and systems periodically to ensure compliance with this policy.
- (d) Should an end user wish to have a private means of accessing their personal email accounts/other communications, including any access to the internet for personal reasons, end users ought to do so utilizing their electronic device and not through a connection to the employer's network; and must do so at a time that is appropriate according to the use of personal electronic devices guidelines.

**Security**

- (a) The information on Internet/Intranet-related systems should be classified as confidential or not confidential. End users should take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorized access to information of a confidential nature.
- (b) Authorized responsible for the security of their passwords/accounts and must use extreme caution when opening email attachments received from unknown senders, which may contain viruses, etc. (c) End users must exercise caution when sending any e-mail from inside Portage la Prairie School Division to an outside network to prevent the unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure of sensitive or personal information.
- (d) All end users are responsible for ensuring periodic review and clean-up of their email files to avoid undue overload on the system.

**Unacceptable Use**

Under no circumstances may Portage la Prairie School Division-owned resources be used to engage in any activity deemed illegal under provincial, federal, or international law.

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**Other prohibited activities include (but are not limited to)**

- Violations of the rights of any person, organization, or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent, or other intellectual property or similar laws or regulations.
- Unauthorized copying of copyrighted material, including installation of any copyrighted software for which Portage la Prairie School Division or the end user does not have an active license.
- Exporting software, technical information, encryption software or technology in violation of international or regional export control laws is illegal. The appropriate administrator/divisional authority should be consulted before the export of any material that is in question.
- Introducing malicious programs into the network or server (e.g., viruses, worms, Trojan horses, e-mail bombs, spyware, etc.).
- Using abusive language, including hate mail, harassment, or discriminatory remarks
- Deliberately accessing inappropriate websites that contain obscene material, including reviewing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are obscene, vulgar, or sexually explicit or that use language that degrades others.
- Using networks for a commercial, political, or profit-making enterprise, except as expressly agreed to with the Division
- Using or accessing a file or an account owned by another user without his/her permission or deliberately distributing or downloading any material in such a manner that causes congestion of networks
- Installing software that is not legally licensed for use. (i.e., pirated software); or Installing software that is not supplied or approved for use by the Division without authorization by an administrator
- Installing any hardware not owned by the Portage la Prairie School Division
- Revealing your account password to others or allowing others to use your account. This includes family and other household members when work is done at home.
- Using a Portage la Prairie School Division computing asset or device to actively engage in procuring or transmitting material that is in violation of any laws or violation of the Freedom from Violence or Freedom from Harassment administrative procedures of the Portage la Prairie Division.
- Making fraudulent offers of products, items, or services originating from any Portage la Prairie School Division account.
- Using any program/script, command, or sending messages of any kind with the intent to interfere with or disable a user's host device via any means, locally or via the Internet/Intranet/Extranet.
- Providing information about, or lists of, Portage la Prairie School Division end users to parties outside Portage la Prairie School Division when not authorized to do so.

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**Prohibited-Mail and Communications Activities**

- (a) Sending non-work-related, unsolicited e-mail messages or other types of electronic communications, including the sending of "junk mail" or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (e-mail spam).
- (b) Any form of harassment via electronic communication, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages.
- (c) Creating or forwarding chain letters" or "pyramid schemes of any type.
- (d) Use of unsolicited e-mail originating from within Portage la Prairie School Division networks of other Internet/Extranet service providers on behalf of, or to advertise, any service hosted by Portage la Prairie School Division or connected via the Portage la Prairie School Division network.

**Guidelines on Anti-Virus Process**

- (a) Always update the Portage la Prairie School Division standard-supported anti-virus software when requested (typically, this process is automated).
- (b) NEVER open any files or macros attached to an e-mail from an unknown, suspicious, or untrustworthy source. Report the items as SPAM and delete these attachments immediately, then "double-delete" them by emptying your trash.
- (c) Delete spam, chain, and other junk e-mail without forwarding.
- (d) Never download files from unknown or suspicious sources.
- (e) Back up critical data and system configuration regularly and store the data safely.

**Personal Mobile Devices (PMD):**

Personal Mobile Devices include, but are not limited to, any piece of lightweight electronically powered equipment. These devices are typically consumer electronics capable of communications, data processing and/or utility. Examples range from hand-held lightweight electronic devices such as tablets, e-readers and smartphones to small devices such as MP3 players, smart watches and electronic toys.

**Use of Personal Mobile Devices by Staff, Visitors to the School, and Students**

**Staff and Visitors at all Grade Levels**

Portage la Prairie School Division staff will support students in minimizing distractions and enhancing student learning and safety by appropriately modelling the responsible and appropriate use of PMD in the learning environment. As such, when on school property, a PMD must be turned off when staff and visitors have contact time with students. This includes when staff (and visitors, where applicable) are in class, supervising students in school, or participating in a school event.

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Staff must not send or receive personal communications during the work day, excluding their scheduled break periods. This includes supervising, teaching, or preparing for the educational needs of students.

For staff in grades 9-12, PMD may be used in class for educational purposes when directed by teachers for student learning. The teacher must discuss this with the school principal before using the PMD for classroom instruction.

Use of PMD for urgent and/or emergency communications related to the safety and well-being of students, staff, or visitors is allowed at the administrator's discretion.

### **Kindergarten to Grade 8**

Students may not access or use PMD during school hours, including breaks and lunch. All PMD must be turned off when the student enters the school property. These devices may not be activated at any point during the regular school day. Students may not leave class to make or receive electronic communication (i.e., cell phone calls, text messages, or other Internet communication).

Kindergarten to Grade 8 students are encouraged to leave their PMD at home when transported to school by bus or walking. If students bring a PMD to school, they must follow the protocols outlined at their school. PMD will not be permitted on school outings, field trips, or extra-curricular activities.

### **Grades 9 to 12**

Students may not use PMD during class time. Students may be permitted to use PMD during break times/lunch as per policies developed by the school. Students may also be permitted to use PMD in class for educational purposes *when specifically directed by classroom teachers*.

Students may be permitted to use PDM in grades 9 to 12 during school outings, field trips, or extra-curricular events, provided the supervising academic staff (principal or teacher) permits using a PMD.

### **For all Students**

Any use of a PMD during prohibited times or in an inappropriate manner will result in the student being required to present and relinquish their device to school staff immediately upon staff request. Devices will be returned to parents or guardians under conditions set by the administration.

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### **For all End Users**

When determined to be necessary, the administrator can make appropriate exceptions to support medical and diverse needs. A documented plan regarding those identified needs and circumstances will be discussed and established.

PMD with cameras must be kept out of sight and not activated in washrooms, change rooms or other private areas. Use of a PMD or digital camera to record video, still shots, or sound must be done with the permission of the supervising staff member and with full advance knowledge and permission of any individual or group being recorded. Sharing, distribution, or broadcasting of any such material must be done with the full permission of every recorded individual.

Posting to the Internet may require written permission from parents. Recordings made secretly and/or used maliciously will result in disciplinary action.

*The Portage la Prairie School Division will assume no responsibility in any circumstance for the loss, destruction, damage or theft of any PMD or for any communication costs associated with the unauthorized use of such devices. Students and families are responsible for locating such lost or stolen items.*

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## Responsible Use of Technology Agreement

In today's digital world, technology, including the internet, plays a crucial role in education.

To ensure a safe and productive learning environment, we ask that students and parents/guardians read, discuss, and agree to the following guidelines for responsible use of technology and internet resources in the classroom.

The Portage la Prairie School Division's computers, software, networks, electronic systems, and Internet access are provided for educational and research purposes and for conducting official school business. All technological resources, including personal devices used on Division property or connected to the Division network, must be utilized responsibly, efficiently, ethically, and legally. Usage must align with the Division's Purpose and Mission Statements and the policies and procedures outlined by the School Division.

### Student Responsibilities

#### 1. Respect and Courtesy

- I will use all technology, including school devices and the internet, in a respectful and responsible manner.
- I will treat others with respect in all my online communications and avoid cyberbullying, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour, and I will only access resources that benefit my education.
- If I accidentally find something inappropriate online, I will immediately report it to staff.
- I will only use my school email for school-related activities. I will not use it to sign up for non-school services, websites, or social media platforms.

#### 2. Digital Citizenship

- I will protect my personal information and respect the privacy of others. I will not share my or others' personal information online without permission.
- I will not attempt to access inappropriate, harmful, or illegal content online. I will report such content to the staff immediately if I encounter it accidentally.

#### 3. Device Care and Use

- I will take good care of any school-issued devices and use them for educational purposes only.
- I will not use devices for non-educational activities, such as gaming or social media, during class time unless my teacher gives me permission.

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4. Academic Integrity

- I will not use technology to cheat or plagiarize. I understand that copying someone else’s work and presenting it as my own violates school policy.
- I will give credit to others when I use their ideas or information in my work.

5. Safety and Security

- I will keep my passwords secure and not share them with others.
- I will report any suspicious activities or security risks I encounter online to school staff.

**Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

1. Supervision and Support

- I will support the school’s efforts to educate my child about digital citizenship and safe technology use and encourage responsible and ethical behaviour online at home.

2. Communication and Involvement

- I will communicate with the school if I have concerns about my child’s use of technology or if my child reports any issues related to online safety or device use.
- I will encourage my child to ask for help if they encounter problems or feel uncomfortable with something they experience online.

**Consequences for Misuse**

I understand that any misuse of technology or internet resources may result in consequences, including but not limited to loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action, or further consequences as outlined in the school’s code of conduct.

**Agreement**

By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read, understood, and agree to comply with the terms of this Responsible Use Agreement. We recognize the importance of using technology responsibly to maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

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**RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT**

**Student**

I promise to follow the Responsible Use Agreement and take my technology responsibilities seriously. I know it's important to stick to these rules. If I have any problems or don't follow the rules, there might be changes to my access, school actions, or other measures to fix the issue.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian**

As a parent, I am committed to supporting the school's efforts to teach my child about digital citizenship and safe technology use. I will communicate with the school if I have concerns about my child's technology use or if they report any online safety or device use issues. Additionally, I will encourage my child to seek help if they encounter problems or feel uncomfortable with something they experience online. I have read and understood the school's technology use procedures and agree to support and uphold these policies to ensure a safe and positive digital environment for my child.

By signing this, I consent to my child using the internet and technology devices at school.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact your school principal for additional information about the Portage la Prairie School Division Technology Programs or to seek answers to specific questions regarding this Responsible Use Agreement.

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