

# NSW Secondary Principals' Council



## Social Media & Digital Citizenship Position Paper Ratified: 2011

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### **Rationale:**

Integrating technology into teaching and learning practice is an essential mechanism for engaging modern learners. NSW public secondary schools have technology embedded in all teaching and learning, communication and administrative practices. Teachers rely on technology for the delivery of lessons and have become technology engaged learners themselves. Since technology is rapidly changing so too is teacher professional learning.

Students of the 21st century are increasingly engaged in all manner of technology based communications and learning. Schools need to be at the forefront of developing critical thinking, information literacy, media literacy and communications literacy. Schools need to be able to be responsive to the abundance of information, rapid changes in technology tools and the ability to collaborate and make individual contributions on an unprecedented scale. Social media provides learning opportunities by connecting and engaging students and staff with the wider world. As a result schools will be positioned to deliver meaningful educational outcomes for all of our public education students.

The places where controls are minimal and students are at greatest risk of harm are the home and mobile environments. Schools cannot regulate these environments. Students are out of school more hours than they are in school. These factors impact on the role of schools to minimise risk and support students, parents and the wider community. Schools have web filtering, policies and practices to protect students. There is an important role for schools in educating students and families to these risks of harm, in modelling appropriate use of technologies and in providing robust Student Welfare Policies.

### **Principles:**

#### **Social Media**

- Cyber issues education needs to be a coordinated K to 12 quality education program
- Cyber issues are included in student welfare policies.
- Schools have a responsibility to respond to cyber-harassment and cyber-bullying within our school community
- Students have access to all manner of communication technologies, some of which are not protected by DEC filters.



- DEC should continue to provide staged web filtering with different access for students at different stages of learning with a mechanism to open filtering for specific purposes.
- The integrated use of web-based learning tools will enhance quality teaching and learning outcomes for teachers and students.

## Digital Citizenship

- Schools have a significant role to educate students, parents and the community in digital citizenship.
- Schools ensure staff have access to additional quality funded targeted professional learning for integration of technology into teaching and learning.
- DEC has a responsibility to continue to produce quality Digital Citizenship materials & lessons to model interactive teaching and learning.
- DEC has a responsibility to inform and educate teachers and Principals through high quality funded TPL activities supporting proactive innovation in schools.
- DEC ensures staff in schools have access to current effective technologies, including both hardware and software, to ensure teaching and relevance of digital citizenship learning outcomes.

## Recommended Practices:

- Principals need to maintain their connection with their local police to further the memorandum of understanding
- School policies and procedures need to include reference to cyber-harassment and cyber-bullying in school Student Welfare documentation
- Digital citizenship material & lessons are an effective mechanism to educate teachers, students and the wider community, [www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au](http://www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au)
- Teachers are in a unique position to influence the engagement of students in the online environment. The relevance and timing of this instruction needs to be carefully considered, particularly at critical transition points eg 6/7, 8/9 and 10/11.
- Schools continue to take advantage of opportunities to provide relevant information to students and families.
- In addition to a whole school commitment, the PDHPE curriculum include at all stages:- development of resilience, understanding of, identifying and dealing with conflict, developing a range of communication skills including interpersonal skills with reference to digital citizenship outcomes

## SPC Expectations of DEC

- recognises that the environment of public schools in NSW is managed with filters that control the access to the online environment. The control of filters is continuously monitored and responsive to educational requests.
- consideration does need to be given to differentiating the filters between staff and students.
- TAFE 15+ access and School 15+ access through DEC should be similar with common enrolment registration and common portal access.
- ongoing representation of SPC on web filtering and digital citizenship teams
- develop protocols to notify the sender when an email is blocked and not forwarded to the intended recipient

- Student Wellbeing policies include support for cyber-harassment and cyber-bullying
- Safety and security to support Principals in dealing with matters of cyber-harassment and cyber-bullying in our schools
- Ongoing development of interactive online digital citizenship learning materials to empower schools to lead effective education programs
- Continue at least current level of resourcing for current technologies & professional learning to ensure teachers are at the forefront

