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Top 5 Social Media Tips for Principals and Vice-Principals: Avoiding Pitfalls

Many of the tips below are drawn from a summary of a session at the Canadian Education Law Association (CAPSLE) conference that part of our team attended this past week, and we wanted to share them with members.

1. Don't contact students on social media.

Why: Protects student safety and preserves clear professional boundaries.

Do: Follow policy and admin procedures for technology and district communication use only.

2. Don't post confidential or non-public information.

Why: Breaches privacy obligations and trust, with potential legal consequences.

Do: Treat all student, staff, and organizational information as confidential unless explicitly public.

3. Don't criticize the employer, colleagues, students, or community online.

Why: Undermines trust, working relationships, and organizational reputation.

Do: Raise concerns through appropriate internal or professional channels.

4. Don't engage impulsively or in heated online exchanges.

Why: Online content is permanent and easily misinterpreted. It can also signal a lack of judgement that could result in a loss of public confidence and trust.

Do: Pause, reflect, and consider impact before posting or responding.

5. Don't "like," repost, or endorse content that conflicts with educational or employer standards.

Why: Engagement can be viewed as endorsement.

Do: Ensure online activity aligns with professional standards and employer values.

Self-check

Before sharing, consider if it could negatively affect you, your school, your district, or your professional reputation.

Bottom line:

If you would be uncomfortable seeing it reported publicly, do not post or engage.

Any questions or concerns that members might be navigating can be directed to the MSS team at mssinfo@bcpyva.bc.ca