

# EDUCATION FACT SHEET

## Protecting Your Students' Privacy Online

Online educational tools and social media provide new opportunities for teachers to learn, enhance educational techniques and connect with students, parents, and the greater community. Protecting students' privacy in the age of technology has never been more important.

### PRIVACY RISKS OF ONLINE TOOLS AND SERVICES

Terms and conditions and privacy policies for online tools can make it difficult to determine if you are complying with provincial privacy laws. For example, some online services:

- collect and retain students' and parents' personal information such as names and email addresses
- track and record online activities and interactions with other students
- evaluate students' performance to generate learning profiles and market products directly to students and parents
- sell students' information to third parties

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario recommends that teachers considering the use of online educational services:

- consult with school officials before selecting these services
- read privacy policies and terms of service carefully to understand how students' information may be collected, used and disclosed
- only use school board approved apps and services



- provide students with guidance on how to use the services in ways that protect their privacy
- use services that do not require students to identify themselves by name and email or other identifying information

## SOCIAL MEDIA

When using social media, it is important to make sure you are protecting your students' privacy at all times. Make sure to:

- carefully read and follow the school's policies on the use of social media
- avoid posting photos, videos or student work that contains identifiable information
- get consent before posting photos and videos of class activities, and before posting any information about a student that discloses their personal information

For more information about the collection, use and disclosure of students' personal information, contact the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario at **info@ipc.on.ca**.