

### Background

The Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education is committed to the health, well-being, and work-life balance of its employees, as well as the continued safety and efficiency of its operations. The purpose of this administrative procedure is to identify the divisions expectations and requirements with respect to the ability of employees to disconnect from work.

This administrative procedure aligns with the [Board's Strategic Priorities](#) under mental health and wellness.

### Definitions

*Disconnecting from Work:* not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, phone calls, video calls or the sending/receiving or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work.

*Employee:* all persons who are currently engaged in active employment with the Division, regardless of employment status (e.g., full-time, part-time, regular, term, contract, occasional, casual, Trustee).

*Professional Obligations:* activities related to an employee's duties that include (but are not limited to) tasks outside of the normal working hours (e.g. Board meetings, staff meetings, school council meetings, parent teacher conferences, lesson planning, communicating with parents, colleagues and/or community members, entering leave days and preparing materials for occasional teachers, participating in professional development, communication during overtime, responding to emergencies (such as building alarms, security breach, property damage, breach of systems/hacking attempts, server/network failures, virus infiltration, etc.) and/or tragic events, etc.).

*After Normal Working Hours:* anytime between the hours of 6:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m., Monday to Friday; all day Saturday, Sunday, statutory holidays, and if (applicable) any other Board-designated non-working days. If an employee's normal working hours fall within the hours noted above or requiring an employee to be available for after-hour emergencies, these hours would be adjusted accordingly.

*Emergency:* a serious event that occurs unexpectedly and requires urgent attention and/or action. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. A matter related to safety and security of division property;
- b. Lack of appropriate staffing;
- c. School closure;
- d. A matter related to the health and safety of an employee or student.

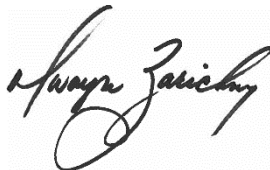
## Procedures

While digital tools allow employees flexibility and the ability to communicate with their colleagues easily, it is important to maintain work-life balance. Employees have the right to disconnect from work and this administrative procedure ensures employees are aware of this.

1. Employees are not expected to respond to phone calls, emails or texts from their colleagues, supervisor, parents, students, or other stakeholders during non-work hours, except in the case of an emergency.
2. Employees should use reasonable judgement when communicating with their colleagues outside of work hours.
3. MHCBE has instituted the “Right to Disconnect” (weekdays from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.; all day Saturday, Sunday, statutory holidays, and if (applicable) any other Board-designated non-working days) unless in an emergency. This expectation applies across our division and includes our family communities as well.
4. Employees can use the “schedule send” feature in their email if composing an email outside of working hours so that it sent within the 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday – Friday time-frame.

## Responsibilities

1. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with the administrative procedure, including the designation of required resources.
2. Human Resources is responsible for ensuring all current and new employees receive a copy of this administrative procedure.
3. Principals, Vice-Principals and Supervisors are responsible for understanding this administrative procedure and the ability of employees to disconnect from work as well as determining a mutually agreeable method for reaching their staff in the event of an emergency.
4. All staff are responsible for understanding their right to disconnect from work outside of normal working hours unless it is an emergency; working with their supervisor to determine a mutually agreeable method to communicate after hours in the event of an emergency; as well as use reasonable judgement when communicating with their colleagues outside of work hours.

<b>Reference:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Employment Standards Code</a></li><li>• Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board</li><li>• Holy Spirit School Division</li></ul>	<b>Approved:</b> 
	<b>Date Approved:</b> September 2022
	<b>Reviewed or Revised:</b>

*Note: References shall be updated as required and do not require additional approval*