

February 14, 2012

Re: Safeguarding: E-safety and Cyberbullying

Dear Parents/Guardians:

It has been brought to our attention that some students at Frontier School of Excellence may have Facebook profiles, as well as other types of social media profiles, such as Twitter, MySpace, Google Plus+ etc.

Frontier is committed to **promoting the safe and responsible use of the Internet** and as such feel it is our responsibility to bring this to your attention.

Websites such as Facebook offer amazing communication and social connections, however they also provide outlets for public negative communication, cyber bullying and ridicule. **Our concern as a public school is that these negative online interactions could potentially lead to fighting and/or other types of inappropriate behavior on school property.**

We encourage parents and guardians to be aware of their child's social media interactions to ensure their overall safety. **Important facts to remember** about social media sites:

- Children may “accept friend requests” from people they don’t know, which could increase the risk of inappropriate contact or behavior
- Language, games, groups and content posted or shared on social media sites are not moderated, and therefore can be offensive, illegal or unsuitable for children
- Photographs shared by users are not moderated and therefore children could be exposed to inappropriate images or even post their own
- Underage users might be less likely to keep their identities private and lying about their age can expose them to further risks regarding privacy settings and options
- Social media sites, like Facebook could be exploited by bullies and for other inappropriate contact
- Social media sites, like Facebook cannot and does not verify its members therefore it is important to remember that if your child can lie about who they are online, so can anyone else!

We feel it important to point out to parents the risks of such social media sites, so you can make an informed decision as to whether to allow your child to have a profile or not.

Should you decide to allow your child of any age to have a Facebook or social media

profile(s) **we strongly encourage you to set up your own profile so you understand how the site works and ask them to have you as a friend on their profile** so you know what they are posting online.

Help your child understand the following:

- Always keep your profile private
- Never accept friends you don't know in real life
- Never post anything which could reveal your identity
- Never post anything you wouldn't want your parents to see
- Never agree to meet somebody you only know online without telling a trusted adult
- Always tell someone if you feel threatened or someone upsets you

Sincerely,

Burak Yilmaz, M.Ed
Principal