

11 Ontario students suspended for 'cyber-bullying'

Punishments at Catholic high school north of Toronto followed comments posted on Facebook

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[CBC News](#)

Eleven students at a Catholic high school north of Toronto have been suspended after posting comments about their principal on the online social networking site Facebook.

Students at Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School in Caledon East began an online group calling the principal the "grinch of school spirit" after the school enforced a district ban on electronic devices and announced it would impose a uniform policy.

Last week, the school administration was notified about the website. As a result, 11 male and female students at the 2,000-student school were given suspensions ranging from three to eight days.

Bruce Campbell, a spokesman for the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, told CBC Radio on Monday that the comments posted on Facebook were demeaning to the principal. He also said they were "extremely vulgar and very profane."

Campbell said one of the suspended students was a member of school council and another was a varsity team member.

"Overall, these students were not known to frequent the office for the wrong things," he said.

Campbell said the comments violated the school's code of conduct, calling the situation "a case of cyber-bullying."

He said if the incident had involved students posting comments about a classmate, it would have been dealt with in the same way.

Facebook is a site similar to MySpace, allowing people to communicate through work, regional or school networks. Users can post comments on individual member sites or group sites.

The Facebook group that the Caledon East students set up had attracted nearly 300 student members.

It has been removed from the Facebook site.

Campbell said Facebook has also caused problems in other school boards in the province.