

Your Right to Disconnect at the end of the School Day

Ontario's new right-to-disconnect legislation, which took effect on June 2, 2022, requires employers with 25 or more employees to have a written policy about workers disconnecting from their job at the end of the workday.

The term "disconnecting from work" is defined in the Employment Standards Act to mean not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or sending or reviewing other messages; to be free from the performance of work.

From Bluewater [AP 7241-D](#), "Disconnecting from Work":

- *The Bluewater District School Board is committed to providing a psychologically safe and healthy work environment that promotes and supports its employees' work-life boundaries and balance, enabling our employees to prioritize effectively between their work and personal life.*
- *Bluewater District School Board employees have the right to disconnect from work after hours, during their scheduled time off, or during an approved leave of absence, subject to specific exemptions, including but not limited to, emergencies/significant events, designated on-call, assigned overtime, or with agreement to do so, without fear of reprisal and/or progressive discipline.*
- *Board employees are asked to use their professional judgement when determining whether to send a communication outside of a recipient's working hours, or when determining whether to respond to a communication received after hours.*

Some ways to use O365 to disconnect from work:

You may decide to send or respond to emails outside of the school day, but be aware that doing so may give the recipient the impression that you are available to them at that time of day. (If the recipient is another board employee, be aware that you may be infringing on *their* right to disconnect; see the third bullet above.) In Outlook, it is possible to schedule when an email will be sent. The steps are different depending on which version of Outlook you are using. See the chart below.

Another way to protect your personal time is to set an automatic out-of-office response on your BWDSB email account, so that if a colleague, student, or parent emails you on weekends, holidays, a leave, or a sick day, they get an automated response telling them that you are unavailable at the moment but will read their email when you return to work. Again, the steps are different depending on which version of Outlook you are using. See the chart below.

(It's not currently possible to set an automatic reply to recur each day after work hours have ended; however, you could choose to turn this on at the end of each day and expire the following morning, if you wish, although that doesn't seem very efficient or convenient.)

How to use O365 to disconnect from work:

	How to schedule-send an email	How to set out-of-office email responses
In the web-based version of Outlook:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After composing your email, click the arrow to the right of the “send” button. 2. Click “schedule send.” 3. Click “custom time.” 4. Choose the date and time you’d like your email to send. 5. Click “Send.” <p>NOTE: The message will stay in your Drafts folder until the scheduled time. If you click on the message, you can see that it is marked with “[Schedule Send]” and the date and time you selected.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open Outlook on the web. 2. Click the gear icon at the top right corner of the screen to access Outlook settings. 3. Click “view all Outlook settings.” 4. Under the “Mail” tab, click “automatic replies.” 5. Toggle the switch marked “automatic replies.” 6. If you want to set a specific time period, click the box beside “send replies only during a time period” and choose the start and end date/time. (If you skip this step, it will send the automatic reply forever.) 7. Compose your out-of-office message. 8. You have the option to choose “send replies outside your organization” (i.e. parents) and “send replies only to contacts” (if you have saved any addresses in your Outlook contacts). 9. Click “save.”
In the Outlook client (app) for PC:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After composing your email, click the “Options” tab at the top of the screen. 2. Click “delay delivery.” 3. In the window that pops up, under “delivery options,” check the box beside “do not deliver before” and choose the date and time you’d like your email to send. 4. Click “close.” 5. Click “send.” <p>NOTE: You will not see this message until it sends, after which it will appear in your “sent” folder.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the Outlook client for PC, click “file” in the top left corner. 2. Click “automatic replies” in the middle of the screen. Click “send automatic replies.” 3. If you want to set a specific time period, click the box beside “only send during this time range” and choose the start and end date/time. (If you skip this step, it will send the automatic reply forever.) 4. You will notice there are 2 tabs, marked “inside my organization” and “outside my organization.” You can choose one or both for your automatic reply; additionally, you can set up different replies in each tab, if you wish. 5. Compose your out-of-office message(s) in the appropriate tabs. 6. Click “OK” to save.
In the Outlook client (app) for Mac:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After composing your email, click the arrow to the right of the “send” button. 2. Click “send later.” 3. In the window that pops up, choose the date and time you’d like your email to send. 4. Click “Send.” <p>NOTE: The message will stay in your Drafts folder until the scheduled time. If you click on the message, you can see that it is marked “This message is scheduled to be sent at ____.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the Outlook client for Mac, click the “Tools” tab at the top of the screen. 2. Click “automatic replies.” 3. Click the box beside “set automatic replies for account ____.” 4. Under “reply once to senders within my organization,” compose your out-of-office message. 5. If you want to set a specific time period, click the box beside “send replies only during this time period” and choose the start and end date/time. (If you skip this step, it will send the automatic reply forever.) 6. You have the option to “send replies outside my organization” and can choose “Send only to my contacts” or “send to all external senders.” If you chose this, compose an out-of-office message in this box. 7. Click “OK” to save.

At this time, it is not possible to schedule-send or set up out-of-office email responses on your phone, using either the iPhone or Android Outlook apps.