

524 - INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the education district computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding student and employee access to the education district computer system and the Internet, including electronic communications, the education district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the education district computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The education district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the education district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

The education district is providing students and employees with access to the education district computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the Internet. The education district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the education district and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of the education district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the education district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate education district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

- A. The following uses of the education district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:
1. Users will not use the education district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit or distribute:
 - a. pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
 - b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
 - c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
 - d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;
 - e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
 2. Users will not use the education district system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 3. Users will not use the education district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
 4. Users will not use the education district system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the education district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the education district's security system, and will not use the education district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
 5. Users will not use the education district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.

6. Users will not use the education district system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
 - a. This paragraph does not prohibit the posting of employee contact information on education district web pages or communications between employees and other individuals when such communications are made for education-related purposes (i.e., communications with parents or other staff members related to students).
 - b. Employees creating or posting school-related web pages may include personal contact information about themselves on a webpage. However, employees may not post personal contact information or other personally identifiable information about students unless:
 - (1) Such information is classified by the education district as directory information and verification is made that the education district has not received notice from a parent/guardian or eligible student that such information is not to be designated as directory information in accordance with Policy 515; or
 - (2) Such information is not classified by the education district as directory information but written consent for release of the information to be posted has been obtained from a parent/guardian or eligible student in accordance with Policy 515.In addition, prior to posting any personal contact or personally identifiable information on a school-related web page, employees shall obtain written approval of the content of the postings from the building administrator.
 - c. These prohibitions specifically prohibit a user from utilizing the education district system to post personal information about a user or another individual on social networks, including, but not limited to, social networks such as "MySpace" and "Facebook."

7. Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated education district official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the education district system or any other system through the education district system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user. Messages and records on the education district system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate school authorities.
 8. Users will not use the education district system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
 9. Users will not use the education district system for conducting business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the education district. Users will not use the education district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the education district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate education district official.
 10. Users will not use the education system to locate and use proxy servers as a means to get around the protection put in place, to protect the students and users in the district.
- B. A student or employee engaging in the foregoing unacceptable uses of the Internet when off education district premises also may be in violation of this policy as well as other education district policies. Examples of such violations include, but are not limited to, situations where the education district system is compromised or an education district employee or student is negatively impacted. If the education district receives a report of an unacceptable use originating from a non-school computer or resource, the education district may investigate such reports to the best of its ability. Students or employees may be subject to disciplinary action for such conduct, including, but not limited to, suspension or cancellation of the use or access to the education district computer system and the Internet and discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, or termination of employment.

- C. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate education district official. In the case of an education district employee, the immediate disclosure shall be to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the building administrator. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. In certain rare instances, a user also may access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher or, in the case of an education district employee, the building administrator.

VI. FILTER

- A. With respect to any of its computers with Internet access, the education district will monitor the online activities of both minors and adults and employ technology protection measures during any use of such computers by minors and adults. The technology protection measures utilized will block or filter Internet access to any visual depictions that are:
 - 1. Obscene;
 - 2. Child pornography; or
 - 3. Harmful to minors.
- B. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
 - 1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or
 - 2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
 - 3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
- C. An administrator, supervisor or other person authorized by the executive director may disable the technology protection measure, during use by an adult, to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- D. The education district will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

VII. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of the education district computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with education district policies and the mission of the education district.

VIII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

- A. By authorizing use of the education district system, the education district does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the education district system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the education district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another education district policy, or the law.
- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or education district policy.
- D. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
- E. Education district employees should be aware that the education district retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and e-mail files. In addition, education district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the education district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- F. The education district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with education district policies conducted through the education district system.

IX. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the education district.

- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet Use Agreement form for students must be read and signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher. The Internet Use Agreement form for employees must be signed by the employee. The form must then be filed at the school office. As supervising teachers change, the agreement signed by the new teacher shall be attached to the original agreement.

X. LIMITATION ON EDUCATION DISTRICT LIABILITY

Use of the education district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The education district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on education district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or misdeliveries or nondeliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The education district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the education district system. The education district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the education district system or the Internet.

XI. USER NOTIFICATION

- A. All users shall be notified of the education district policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
 - 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with education district policies.
 - 2. Disclaimers limiting the education district's liability relative to:
 - a. Information stored on education district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
 - b. Information retrieved through education district computers, networks or online resources.
 - c. Personal property used to access education district computers, networks or online resources.
 - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of education district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 - 3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
 - 4. Notification that, even though the education district may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.

5. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the student and/or the student's parents.
6. Notification that the collection, creation, reception, maintenance and dissemination of data via the Internet, including electronic communications, is governed by Policy 406, Public and Private Personnel Data, and Policy 515, Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.
7. Notification that, should the user violate the education district's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
8. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

XII. PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

- A. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the education district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the education district system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using education district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the education district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:
 1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
 2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
 3. A notification that the parents have the option to request alternative educational activities not requiring Internet access and the material to exercise this option.
 4. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
 5. A statement that the education district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

XIII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A. The education district administration may develop appropriate user notification forms, guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the governing board for approval. Upon approval by the governing board, such guidelines, forms and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.

- B. The administration shall revise the user notifications, including student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. The education district Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, staff and members of the community.
- D. Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the governing board shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT - STUDENT

STUDENT

I have read and do understand the education district policies relating to safety and acceptable use of the education district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by them. I further understand that should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print): _____

User Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the education district policies relating to safety and acceptable use of the education district computer system and the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. The education district has taken precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the education district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the education district or its employees or agents responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print): _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____

SUPERVISING TEACHER

(Must be signed if applicant is a student)

I have read the education district policies relating to safety and acceptable use of the education district computer system and the Internet and agree to promote these policies with the student. Because the student may use the Internet on the education district computer system for individual work or in the context of another class, I cannot be held responsible for the student's use of the Internet on network. As the supervising teacher I do agree to instruct the student on acceptable use of the Internet and network and proper network etiquette.

Teacher's Name (please print): _____

Teacher's Signature: _____

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT - EMPLOYEE

EDUCATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEE

I have read and do understand the education district policies relating to safety and acceptable use of the education district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by them. I further understand that should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print): _____

User Signature: _____

Date: _____

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