

District Internet Use Policy

A. BASIC PROVISIONS

1. The [Name] School District is providing Internet access to its employees, board members, and students. The district's Internet system has a limited educational purpose and has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The district has the right to place restrictions on use to ensure that use of the system is in accord with its limited educational purpose.
2. Student use of the district's Internet system will be governed by this policy, related district and school regulations, and the student disciplinary code. Staff use will be governed by this policy, related district and school regulations, district employment policy, and the collective bargaining agreement. The due process rights of all users will be respected in the event there is a suspicion of inappropriate use of the district Internet system. Users have limited privacy expectations in the contents of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the district system.
3. Students' constitutional rights to freedom of speech and freedom to access information will be protected when they use the Internet in school. The district Internet system is a limited public forum. The district may restrict access to materials or may place restrictions on student speech for valid educational reasons. The district will not restrict student access to information or speech on the basis of viewpoint discrimination.
4. The district makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the district Internet system will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damage users

may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data, interruptions of service, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The district will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the system. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. Users or parents of users will indemnify and hold the district harmless from any losses sustained as the result of misuse of the system by that user. Use of the system by students will be limited to those students whose parents have signed a disclaimer of claims for damages against the district.

5. The district has developed and approved this policy in accord with the statutory requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act. The policy was developed with input and feedback from staff, students, parents, and community members. The policy represents the district’s good-faith efforts to promote the safe, ethical, responsible, and legal use of the Internet, support the effective use of the Internet for educational purposes, protect students against potential dangers in their use of the Internet, and ensure accountability.

B. DUE PROCESS

1. The [Name] School District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation involving or relating to any unlawful activities conducted through the district Internet system.
2. User access to the district Internet system will require the use of an account name and password to enable individual users to be identified. [Optional: You may wish to add “Elementary students may use the Internet through a classroom user account and password” here.]
3. In the event of an allegation that a student has violated this policy, the student will be provided with notice and an opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the student disciplinary code.
4. Employee violations of this policy will be handled in accord with district policy and the collective bargaining agreement.

5. Notice of student or staff violation of this policy shall be forwarded to the [name of committee] to facilitate evaluation of the policy and the implementation strategies.

C. EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

1. The district's Internet system has a limited educational purpose.
 - a. The term *educational purpose* includes use of the system for classroom activities, continuing education, professional or career development, and high-quality, educationally enriching personal research.
 - b. Students may not use the system for personal commercial purposes, including offering or purchasing products or services. Staff may use the system for personal commercial purposes if such use is extremely limited.
 - c. Users may not use the system for lobbying activities, as defined under [applicable statute prohibiting use of public funds for lobbying]. This provision shall not limit the use of the system by students or staff for the purposes of communicating with elected representatives or expressing views on political issues.
 - d. Staff may use the district Internet system for communications related to collective bargaining and union organizational activities.
 - e. A school may establish an after-school "open access" program or enter into an agreement with an authorized after-school activities provider to allow open access to the Internet for noneducational purposes. All student use during open access hours must be closely supervised. It shall be made clear to students that the district Internet use agreement will cover all use, with the exception that noneducational use of limited access material may occur.
2. The district will provide professional development opportunities for teachers to help them learn how to use the Internet effectively for instructional purposes, disseminate Internet-based lesson plans, and provide technical and instructional support to students.
 - a. Substitute teachers must be specifically certified to instruct in classrooms where students are accessing the Internet.

Certification requirements will ensure that substitute teachers have a standard level of technical proficiency and understand Internet safety and responsible use issues, this policy, and the obligations related to supervision of students in their use of the Internet.

Unless they are under the direct supervision of their cooperating teacher, student teachers must be certified to instruct in classrooms where students are accessing the Internet.

3. Student use and activities will be structured in a manner that is appropriate to the age and skills of students, recognizing the importance of providing more secure environments for younger students and supporting safe and responsible independent use by older students.
4. The district will establish student research resources to facilitate and promote the effective use of the Internet for educational purposes and reduce the potential for student access to inappropriate material. The student research resources will provide access to materials that have been prescreened by educators and other professionals to ensure the appropriateness of the material for educational purposes.
5. Teachers will be encouraged and supported in the creation of classroom Web sites that will direct students to sites with information pertinent to current studies. All sites linked to through the classroom Web site should be prescreened by the teacher to ensure such sites are appropriate in light of the age of the students and relevance to the course objectives.
6. The district and teachers will seek to limit student exposure to commercial advertising and product promotion, especially advertising or promotion of youth-oriented products and services, in the development of the district or classroom Web sites or other assignments that make use of the Internet.
7. For students at the elementary school level, access to information on the Web will be generally be limited to access available through the student research resources or through classroom Web sites. Any student access to material outside such prescreened sites must be closely supervised by the teacher.
8. For students at the secondary school level, access to information on the Web should generally be through the student research resources or through classroom Web sites. Students may access other sites upon approval by their teacher.

9. If use of the online material constitutes fair use under copyright law, teachers may download information from the Web that is necessary for classroom instructional purposes and provide this information to students who do not have Internet access. This information may be provided either in hard-copy form or through a computer system without live access to the Internet.
10. District health personnel, health education teachers, and counselors shall establish a student health and well-being online resource that will provide access to high-quality sites that provide information and support for students facing a wide range of adolescent health issues. The selection of these sites will be based on known youth health and well-being concerns and shall not be limited based on viewpoint discrimination.
11. The district will establish or authorize the use of a controlled communications environment that will allow the students to communicate electronically for educational purposes. Such communications may include e-mail, chat, instant messaging, and blogging.

D. PROTECTIONS AGAINST ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

1. Inappropriate material

- a. The [Name] School District has identified the following types of material as prohibited, restricted, and limited access material.

- i. *Prohibited material.* Prohibited material may not be accessed by the students or staff at any time for any purpose. This category includes material that is obscene, child pornography, and material that is considered harmful to minors as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. The district has designated the following types of materials as prohibited:

Obscene materials.

Child pornography.

Material that appeals to a prurient or unhealthy interest in, or depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, violence, nudity, sex, death, or bodily functions.

Material that has been designated as being for adults only.

Material that promotes or advocates illegal activities.

- ii. *Restricted material.* Material that may arguably fall within the description provided for prohibited material but has clear educational relevance, such as material with literary, artistic, political, or scientific value, will be considered to be restricted. In addition, restricted material includes promotion or advocacy of the use of alcohol and tobacco, hate and other potentially dangerous groups, school cheating, weapons, and [list other issues of concern to the district]. Material that is restricted may not be accessed by elementary or middle school students at any time for any purpose. Restricted material may be accessed by high school students in the context of specific learning activities that have been approved by the building principal.
 - iii. *Limited access material.* Limited access material includes anything generally considered to be noneducational or for entertainment. Limited access material may be accessed in the context of specific learning activities that are directed by a teacher. Limited access material includes electronic commerce, games, jokes, recreation, entertainment, and investments. [*Author's note:* Some schools may wish to allow open access times when access to these noneducational sites would be allowed—for example, at an after school program. Any open access allowed must be closely supervised.]
- b. Any user who inadvertently accesses material that is considered prohibited or restricted should immediately disclose the inadvertent access in a manner specified by their school. This will protect users against an allegation that they have intentionally violated the policy.
 - c. The determination of whether material is prohibited, restricted, or noneducational shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the response of a technological protection measure. The fact that the technological protection measure has not protected against access to certain material shall not create the presumption that such material is appropriate for users to access. The fact that the technological protection measure has blocked access to certain material shall not create the

presumption that the material is inappropriate for users to access.

2. Technological protection measures

- a. Technological protection measures include technologies that seek to block user access to certain sites (filtering software), block inappropriate material from being sent to district users, ensure the security of the district network, and monitor Internet use.
- b. The district has selected technological protection measures for use with the district Internet system and has specified the manner in which these measures will be configured. This selection and configuration is described in the attached document.
- c. District filtering software will always be configured to protect against access to material that is obscene, child pornography, and material that is harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. The district or individual schools may, from time to time, reconfigure the technological protection measures to best meet the educational needs of the district or schools and address the safety needs of the students.
- d. The district safety and responsible use committee will conduct an annual analysis of the effectiveness of the selected technological protection measures and make recommendations to the superintendent regarding selection and configuration.

3. Override, nondiscrimination, disabling, and bypass of filtering software

- a. All district administrators, library media specialists, computer lab coordinators, and safe schools personnel shall have the authority to temporarily override the filtering software to review a Web site that has been blocked and to make the professional decision to provide immediate student access to that site. Other school staff may be designated by a building principal to have override authority.
- b. Students' free-speech rights of access to information within an educational environment shall be fully protected. Care will be taken in the selection and configuration of the

filtering software to ensure that viewpoint discrimination does not occur.

- c. An anonymous process shall be established to allow students to request that a site be permanently unblocked. Decisions about unblocking should generally take no longer than two school days.
- d. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protective actions of the filtering software.
- e. The filtering software may not be disabled at any time that students may be using the district Internet system if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under the Children's Internet Protection Act. The filtering software may be disabled for system administrative purposes when students are not using the system.
- f. Students and staff may not use external proxy servers or other similar technologies to bypass or seek to bypass the filtering software.

E. SUPERVISION, MONITORING, SEARCH AND SEIZURE, AND RETENTION OF RECORDS

1. Student use of the district Internet system will be supervised by staff in a manner that is appropriate to the age of the students and circumstances of use. The building administrator or a designee in each school will develop and disseminate staff supervision requirements. Computers used by students in classrooms and labs will be positioned to facilitate effective staff supervision.
2. The district will monitor student and staff use of the Internet through a regular analysis of Internet usage. Individual schools may implement any additional monitoring systems, as desired.
3. Users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the district system. Users will be fully and regularly informed about the district's supervision and monitoring activities and the limitations on their privacy that result from such supervision and monitoring.

4. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that a user has violated or is violating district policy, regulations, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that such violations have occurred. The nature of the investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the nature of the alleged violation. Individual search of a user's e-mail must be approved by a district administrator responsible for supervision of the student or staff member or by the superintendent or a designee. In the event an individualized search is conducted, a record will be established detailing the reason for the search, the extent of the search, and the results.
5. The superintendent or a designee will implement an Internet records retention system that is in accord with the state public records law [specify relevant legislation]. Internet records that are not subject to retention will be destroyed on a regular basis. Staff will be regularly informed that the contents of their personal files may be discoverable under state public records laws.

F. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

1. Staff will be provided with individual e-mail accounts. Staff will use a signature file that identifies who they are and their position with the district. Staff use of these district e-mail accounts will be for professional purposes.
2. The district or schools will establish controlled electronic communications services, including e-mail, blogs, and real-time electronic communications, for students to use for educational purposes.
3. Teachers will supervise and regularly review all electronic communications of students.
4. Students may not establish or access Web-based e-mail accounts or commercial services through the district Internet system unless such accounts have been approved for use by the individual school.

G. UNLAWFUL, UNAUTHORIZED, AND INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES

1. Unlawful activities

- a. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the district Internet system or to any other computer system through the district system, or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files.
 - b. Users will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
 - c. Users will not use the district Internet system to engage in any other unlawful act, including arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of any person.
2. Inappropriate language
- a. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to all speech communicated through the district Internet system, including public messages, private messages, and material on Web pages or in blogs, or posted in any other manner.
 - b. Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
 - c. Users will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption to the district, a school, or any other organization or person.
 - d. Users will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 - e. Users will not harass or bully another person.
 - f. Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
 - g. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or another school employee any message they receive from any other student that is in violation of the restrictions on inappropriate language. Students should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a staff member.
3. Plagiarism and copyright infringement
- a. Users will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet.
 - b. Users will respect the rights of copyright owners in their use of materials found on, disseminated through, or posted to the Internet.

H. SYSTEM SECURITY AND RESOURCE LIMITS

1. System security
 - a. Users are responsible for the use of their individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account, including protecting the privacy of their password.
 - b. Users will immediately notify the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. However, users will not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an unlawful attempt to gain access.
 - c. Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the district virus protection procedures.
2. Resource limits
 - a. Users will not download large files unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, users will download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used and immediately remove the file from the system computer.
 - b. Users will not misuse district, school, or personal distribution lists or discussion groups by sending irrelevant messages.
 - c. Users will check their e-mail frequently, delete unwanted messages promptly, and stay within their e-mail quota.
 - d. Users will subscribe only to approved high-quality discussion groups that are relevant to their education or professional and career development.
 - e. Excessive use of the district Internet system may raise a reasonable suspicion that a user is using the system in violation of district policy.

I. PROTECTION OF STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

1. All contracts with third-party providers of data management services for the district will be reviewed to ensure compliance with federal and state student privacy and records retention laws.
2. Staff transmission of student confidential information via e-mail must be in compliance with all federal and state student privacy laws.

- a. E-mail transmission will be used only when the circumstances justify the need for immediacy in the transmission of information.
 - b. The subject line of the e-mail should provide an indication that the e-mail contains confidential student information.
 - c. A hard copy of any e-mail containing student confidential information will be retained in accord with district student records retention requirements.
3. Teachers will ensure the protection of student personal information when establishing any relationship with a third-party site or system.
- a. Teachers may require, encourage, or allow students to establish individual accounts on a third-party site or system only under the following circumstances:
 - i. The establishment of the account is necessary to achieve an identified educational purpose.
 - ii. There is no commercial advertising for youth interest products or services on the third-party system.
 - iii. Student personal information and student use data will not be collected, analyzed, or used for commercial advertising or marketing purposes.
 - iv. A minimum amount of information is collected for the purpose of establishing the account, and no personal contact information is provided.
 - v. The third-party system has committed to maintain the privacy of any information provided.
 - vi. The third-party system provides a process by which parents may access, review, and remove their child's account information.
 - b. Signed parental permission must be obtained prior to the establishment of the student account. Notice to the parent about proposed student accounts on third-party systems must include the following information:
 - i. The name, URL, and privacy policy of the third-party system.
 - ii. Description of the educational purpose for establishing the account.

- iii. The period of time for which the account will be established.
 - iv. Information on how parents can access their child's records on the third-party site.
4. Collection, analysis, or sale of student use data for commercial purposes: The district may not enter into any agreement with a third-party supplier of Internet-related services if the third-party service provider intends to collect, analyze, or sell individual or anonymous student use data for the purpose of commercial advertising and marketing research activities. The collection and analysis of student use data strictly for the purpose of evaluation and improvement of the educational site is acceptable.
5. Privacy and communication safety standards: Students will abide by the following privacy and communication safety standards when using the district Internet system, including use of electronic communications and the Web.
- a. In this context, "personal contact information" includes the student's name, together with other information that would allow an individual to locate the student, including parent's name, home address or location, work address or location, or phone number.
 - b. Elementary and middle school students will not disclose their full names or any other personal contact information for any purpose.
 - c. High school students will not disclose personal contact information except to educational institutions for educational purposes, companies or other entities for career development purposes, or with specific staff approval.
 - d. Students will not disclose names, personal contact information, or any other private or personal information about other students under any circumstances.
 - e. Students will not forward a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.
 - f. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Students should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a staff member.

6. The following provisions address the disclosure of student information, posting student-created material, and posting pictures of students on the district Web site or any school Web site. The district or schools may establish password-protected Web sites that will restrict access to staff, students, and their parents. Parents must approve any disclosure of student information and posting of student-created material.
 - a. For students in elementary and middle school, the following standards apply to any material posted on a publicly accessible site:
 - i. Students will use a username that will disguise their full name.
 - ii. Group pictures without identification of individual students are permitted.
 - iii. Student work may be posted with limited student identification.
 - iv. All student-posted work will contain the student's copyright notice, using the student's username.
 - b. For students in elementary and middle school using a password-protected site, parents may approve either the elementary or middle school standards for publicly accessible sites or the following standards:
 - i. Students may be identified by their full name.
 - ii. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted.
 - iii. Student work may be posted with student name.
 - iv. All student-posted work will contain the student's copyright notice, including the student's name.
 - c. For students in high school on publicly accessible sites or password-protected sites, parents may approve either the elementary or middle school standards or the following standards:
 - i. Students may be identified by their full name.
 - ii. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted.
 - iii. Student work may be posted with student name.

- iv. All student-posted work will contain the student's copyright notice, including the student's name.

J. COPYRIGHT MANAGEMENT

1. The district will respect the copyright rights of students and staff.
 - a. Students own the copyright to their creative works, including works created using district resources. The Internet agreement signed by parents will include a request for permission from parents to post student work on the Internet. All student work posted on the Internet will contain a copyright notice indicating the ownership of that work by the students.
 - b. District staff own the copyright to works created outside the scope of their employment responsibilities and without the use of district resources. District staff may post such work on the district Web site to facilitate access by students or staff. Notice of such posting and claim of ownership must be provided to [state to whom it must be given]. By posting such work on the district's Web site, the staff member will grant an nonexclusive license or permission for any staff or student within the district to freely use such work.
 - c. The district shall own the copyright on any works created by district staff within the scope of their employment responsibilities.
2. The district will promote respect for the copyright rights of others.
 - a. The district will provide instruction to staff and students on their rights and responsibilities with respect to the copyright ownership rights of others.
 - b. No material may be disseminated through the district Internet system or posted on the district Internet site unless that material is original, in the public domain, used in accord with the fair use provisions of the copyright law, or is disseminated or posted with permission of the copyright owner.

K. DISTRICT WEB SITE REGULATIONS

1. District Web site: The district will establish a district Web site. Material appropriate for placement on district Web site

includes district information, school information, teacher or class information, student projects, and student extracurricular organization information. Personal information unrelated to education will not be allowed on the district Web site.

- a. The superintendent will designate a district Web publisher to be responsible for maintaining the official district Web site and monitoring all district Web activity. The Web publisher will develop style and content guidelines for official district and school Web materials and develop procedures for the placement and removal of such material.
 - b. All official material originating from the district and posted on the district Web site must be approved through a process established by the district Web publisher.
2. School Web pages: The building principal will designate a school Web publisher to be responsible for managing the school Web site and monitoring class, teacher, student, and extracurricular Web pages. All official material originating from the school will be consistent with the district style and content guidelines and approved through a process established by the school Web publisher. The school Web publisher will develop additional guidelines and placement processes for the school Web site.
 3. Teacher or classroom Web pages and blogs: Teachers may establish Web pages and blogs for use with class activities or that provide a resource for other teachers. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class or educational resource sites and previewing any student work prior to posting.
 4. Noninstructional staff Web pages and blogs: Noninstructional staff may develop Web pages and blogs that provide a resource for others. Staff will be responsible for maintaining their resource sites.
 5. Student Web pages and blogs
 - a. Students may create a Web page and blog as part of a specific instructional activity. Material presented on a student class activity Web page and blog must meet the educational objectives of the instructional activity and be created and maintained under the direct supervision of a teacher.
 - b. It will not be considered a violation of a student's right to free speech to require removal of material that fails to meet

established educational objectives or that is in violation of a provision of the Student Internet Use Policy or student disciplinary code. However, student material may not be removed on the basis of disagreement with the views expressed by the student.

- c. Student Web pages and blogs must include the following notice: “This is a student Web page. Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the district.”
- d. Student Web pages and blogs will be removed at the end of the school year unless special arrangements are made.

6. Extracurricular organization Web pages and blogs

- a. With the approval of the building principal, extracurricular organizations may establish Web pages, including blogs. Material presented on the organization Web page or blog must relate specifically to organization activities.
- b. Organization Web pages must include the following notice: “This is a student extracurricular organization Web page and blog. Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the district.”

7. Web Page and blog requirements

- a. All Web pages and blogs associated with the district are considered to be a limited public forum. All material posted on Web pages and blogs using the district domain will be developed in such a manner as to reflect well upon the district and its schools, staff, and students.
- b. All new district Web site and all school, class, and distance education materials will be fully compliant with disability information technology access standards. The district will develop a plan to revise all existing Web site material to achieve compliance with access standards.
- c. All Internet use policy provisions, including those addressing inappropriate language, privacy, and copyright, will govern material placed on the district Web site.
- d. Web pages and blogs shall not contain the identification information or pictures of the student or student work unless such provision has been approved by the student’s parents or guardians, as has been provided in Section I (6).

- e. Material placed on the Web site is expected to meet academic standards for proper spelling, grammar, and accuracy of information.
 - f. All Web pages and blogs should have a link at the bottom of the page that will help users find their way to the appropriate home page.
8. Web site concerns
- a. The district Web site and each school Web page will have a “Web Site Concerns” link. This link will take the reader to a page that provides the following information:
 - i. [Name] School District seeks to ensure that all materials placed on the district or school Web sites are placed in accord with copyright law and do not infringe on the rights of or harm others in any way.
 - ii. We have provisions in our Internet Use Policy that address copyright, defamation, harassment, invasion of privacy, and other harmful speech.
 - iii. We will promptly respond to any issues of concern. If you have a concern about material placed on our Web site, please contact us. [Add link to e-mail address of an administrator who has the responsibility of promptly responding to any complaint.]