~~TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES~~ ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

~~Acceptable use policy~~

Purpose

District Five Schools of Spartanburg County is providing employees and students with the privilege of access to the district's electronic communication system, which includes Internet access.

The district system has a limited educational purpose. The purpose of the district system is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people from throughout the world. Additionally, the system will be used to increase district intra-communication, enhance productivity and assist district employees in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers. The district system will also assist the district in sharing information with the local community including parents, social service agencies, government agencies and businesses.

Users may not use the district system for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services. District acquisition policies will be followed for district purchase of goods or services through the district system.

Users may not use the system for political lobbying. District employees and students may use the system to communicate with their elected representatives and to express their opinions on political issues.

The term "educational purpose" includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.

District responsibilities

The District Technology Coordinator will serve as the coordinator to oversee the district system and will work with other regional or state organizations as necessary.

The Technology Specialist will serve as the building-level coordinator for the district system, will approve building-level activities, ensure teachers receive proper training in the use of the system and the requirements of this policy, establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of students using the system, maintain executed user agreements and be responsible for interpreting the District Acceptable Use Policy at the building level.

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Technical services provided through district system

District Network

~~District Network.~~ Users will have access to servers connected through Local Area Networks (LAN) at the individual schools and a Wide Area Network (WAN) which connects schools to the district office. The system will provide for file storage and sharing, access to programs and applications, and access to printing services.

E-mail

E-mail will allow employees and students to communicate with people from throughout the world. Users will also be able to subscribe to mail lists to engage in group discussions related to educational subjects.

Internet Access

~~Internet Access.~~ Users will be provided access to Internet resources, including, but not limited to web sites, online media, ~~the World Wide Web (WWW), Telnet, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Newsgroups, and Internet Relay Chat (IRC)~~, and Distance Learning resources such as video and audio conferencing.   Access to these Internet resources may be restricted as deemed necessary.

The Internet can provide a vast collection of educational resources for students and employees. It is a global network that makes it impossible to control all available information. Because information appears, disappears and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. The school district makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Although students will be under teacher supervision while on the network, it is not possible to constantly monitor individual students and what they are accessing on the network. Some students might encounter information that is not of educational value.

~~Blocking software~~ Monitoring and filtering software

The District will acquire software designed to block access to certain sites. Student Internet activities will be monitored by the district to ensure students are not accessing inappropriate sites that have visual depictions that include obscenity, child pornography or are harmful to minors. The school district will use technology protection measures to protect students from inappropriate access.

The district will provide reasonable notice of and at least one public hearing or meeting to address and communicate its Internet safety measures.

Access to the System

The District's Acceptable Use Policy will govern all use of the District system. Student use of the system will also be governed by the school's disciplinary code. Employee use will also be governed by District policy.

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World Wide Web

After the Acceptable Use Policy has been signed, District employees and students will have access to the Web through the district's networked computers. Parents may specifically request that their child(ren) not be provided such access by notifying the District in writing.

Classroom accounts

Elementary age students will be granted e-mail access only through a classroom account. Elementary students may be provided with an individual account under special circumstances at the request of their teacher and with the approval of their parent. An agreement will only be required for an individual account, which must be signed by the student and his/her parent. Parents may specifically request that their child not be provided access through the classroom account by notifying the District in writing (or whatever procedure the district uses for other permissions).

Individual e-mail accounts for students

Secondary students may be provided with individual e-mail accounts. An agreement will be required for an individual e-mail account. This agreement must be signed by the student and his/her parent.

Individual e-mail accounts for district employees

District employees will be provided with an individual network account, which will include e-mail. A signed employee agreement will be required for access to the system.

Guest accounts

Guests may receive an individual account with the approval of a district administrator if there is a specific, district-related purpose requiring such access. Use of the system by a guest must be specifically limited to the district-related purpose. An agreement will be required and parental signature will be required if the guest is a minor.

Parental notification and responsibility

The district will notify the parents about the district network and the policies governing its use. Parents must sign an agreement to allow their student to have an individual account. Parents may request alternative activities for their child(ren) that do not require Internet access.

Parents have the right at any time to investigate the contents of their child's e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.

The District Acceptable Use Policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be fitting with the particular values of the families of the students. It is not practically possible for the district to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, the

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district recognizes that parents bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to their children. The district will encourage parents to specify to their child(ren) what material is and is not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the district system.

The district will provide students and parents with guidelines for student safety while using the Internet. The district will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response. The superintendent or his/her designee will develop a program to educate students on these issues.

District limitation of liability

The district makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the district 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 or interruptions of service. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The district will not be responsible for legal or financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

Due process

The district will cooperate fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the district system.

In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the district acceptable use policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and an opportunity to present an explanation before a neutral administrator or will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the school's disciplinary code.

Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. If the alleged violation also involves a violation of other provisions of the school's disciplinary code, the violation will be handled in accord with the applicable provision of the school's disciplinary code.

Employee violations of the district acceptable use policy will be handled in accord with district policy.

Any district administrator may terminate the account privileges of a guest user by providing notice to the user. Guest accounts not active for more than 30 days may be removed, along with the user's files without notice to the user.

Search and seizure

System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the district system.

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Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that the user has or is violating the district acceptable use policy, the school's disciplinary code or the law.

An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or the school's disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

District employees should be aware that their personal files are discoverable under the state public records laws.

Off-campus conduct

Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers and staff members should be aware that the district may take disciplinary actions for conduct initiated and/or created off-campus involving the inappropriate use of the Internet or web-based resources if such conduct poses a threat or substantially interferes with or disrupts the work and discipline of the schools, including discipline for student harassment and bullying.

Copyright and plagiarism

District policies on copyright will govern the use of material accessed through the district system. Because the extent of copyright protection of certain works found on the Internet is unclear, employees will make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work if their use of the material has the potential of being considered an infringement. Teachers will instruct students to respect copyright and to request permission when appropriate.

District policies on plagiarism will govern use of material accessed through the district system. Teachers will instruct students in appropriate research and citation practices.

Academic freedom, selection of material, student rights to free speech

Board policies on academic freedom and free speech will govern the use of the Internet.

When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will select material that is appropriate in light of the age of the students and that is relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will preview the materials and sites they require or recommend students access to determine the appropriateness of the material contained on or accessed through the site. Teachers will provide guidelines and lists of resources to assist their students in channeling their research activities effectively and properly. Teachers will assist their students in developing the skills to ascertain the truthfulness of information, distinguish fact from opinion and engage in discussions about controversial issues while demonstrating tolerance and respect for those who hold divergent views.

District Web site

District Web site

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The district will establish a Web site and will develop Web pages that will present information about the district. The district technology coordinator will be designated the Webmaster, responsible for maintaining the district Web site.

<u>School or class Web pages</u>

Schools and classes may establish Web pages that present information about the school or class activities. The Technology Specialist or his <u>or her designee, with approval of the Technology Coordinator</u>, will be responsible for managing the school Web site. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class site.

<u>Student Web pages</u>

With the approval of the technology coordinator, students may establish personal Web pages. The district technology coordinator will establish a process and criteria for the establishment and posting of material, including pointers to other sites, on these pages. Material presented in the student's Web site must be related to the student's educational and career preparation activities. Student Web pages must include the following notice: "This is a student Web page. Opinions expressed on this page will not be attributed to the district."

<u>Extracurricular organization Web pages</u>

With the approval of the technology coordinator, extracurricular organizations may establish Web pages. The district technology coordinator will establish a process and criteria for the establishment and posting of material, including pointers to other sites, on these pages. Material presented on the organization Web page must relate specifically to organization activities and will include only student-produced material. Organization Web pages must include the following notice: "This is a student extracurricular organization Web page. Opinions expressed on this page will not be attributed to the district."

District Acceptable Use Policy

The following uses of the district system are considered unacceptable.

- Personal safety

    - Users will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, work address, financial information, etc.

    - Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation.

    - Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

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- <u>Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any incidence of bullying or harassment through digital means, whether through text message, e-mail, imagery, or other online method.</u>

· Illegal activities

- Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the district 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. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing."

- Users will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.

- Vandalism of computer hardware will result in disciplinary action. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, removing mouse ball and/or mouse, deliberately erasing data and/or files, placing foreign objects in disk or CD-ROM drives, and removing or altering placement of keyboard keys.

- Users will not use the district system to engage in any other illegal act such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of other person(s), etc.

· System security

- 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. Under no conditions should a user provide their password to another user.

- Users will immediately notify the technology specialist if they have identified a possible security problem. Users will not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.

- Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the district virus protection procedures if they download software.

· ~~Inappropriate language~~ <u>Respect for others</u>

- Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages and material posted on Web pages.

- Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.

- Users will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.

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- Users will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

- Users will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a user is told by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.

- Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

· Respect for privacy

- Users will not repost a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.

- Users will not post private information about another person.

· Respecting resource limits

- Users will use the system only for educational and professional or career development activities (no time limit), and limited, high quality, self-discovery activities.

- Users will not download files without specific permission from their technology specialist. If permitted, users will download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used and will delete the file when no longer needed.

- Users will not install software on district computers without approval from their Technology Specialist or the District Technology Coordinator. District Five reserves the right to remove software, regardless of approval status, from computers owned by the district.

- Users will not connect hardware or peripherals that do not belong to the district to district computers or the district network without specific approval from their Technology Specialist or the District Technology Coordinator. District Five reserves the right to remove equipment, regardless of approval status, from the district network.

- Users will not post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.

- Users will check their e-mail frequently, delete unwanted messages promptly and stay within their e-mail quota.

- Users will subscribe only to high quality discussion group mail lists that are relevant to their education or professional/career development.

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·   Plagiarism and copyright infringement

-       Users will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.

-       Users will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the users should follow the expressed requirements. If the user is unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner.

·   Inappropriate access to material

-       Users will not use the district system to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature). For students, a special exception may be made for hate literature if the purpose of such access is to conduct research and access is approved by both the teacher and the parent. District employees may access the above material only the context of legitimate research.

-       If users inadvertently accesses such information, he/she 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 Acceptable Use Policy.

Adopted 8/25/97, Revised 05/07/02, 2/27/06

Legal references:

A. *Federal law:*
1. 47 USC Section 254(h) - Children's Internet Protection Act.
2. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998, Section 512 - Limitations on liability relating to material online.

B. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
1. Section 10-1-205 - Computers in public libraries; regulation of Internet access.
2. Section 16-3-850 - Encountering child pornography while processing film or working on a computer.
3. Section 16-15-305 - Disseminating, procuring or promoting obscenity unlawful; definitions; penalties; obscene material designated contraband.
4. Section 59-19-90 - General powers and duties of school trustees.

C. Court cases:
1. Purdham v. Fairfax Co. Sch. Bd., 637 F.3d 421, 427 (4th Cir. 2011).

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