

Instruction

Technology/Internet

1. Introduction

- A. The Internet is an electronic communications network which provides vast, diverse and unique resources. The school supports its use for information, exchange, and collaboration with and from people and sites throughout the world. Our goal is to promote excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Internet use also fosters the development of critical information skills which students will need in the 21st century.
- B. While supporting the right of students and staff to use all available tools to investigate a broad range of topics, the district also recognizes that there may be material on the Internet which is objectionable or devoid of educational value. Although guidelines cannot totally eliminate the possibility of inadvertent or intentional access to such data, we believe that they can significantly limit such possibilities. Our intent is to maximize the educational value of the Internet. These guidelines provide direction for the use of this powerful new resource. Effective, safe, responsible, and legal use of the Internet is our goal.
- C. All users of Board of Education computers, e-mail, etc. are hereby advised that all hardware and software are the property of the Board of Education. The Board provides hardware and software or any hardware or software it acquires in the future solely for appropriate and authorized educational and business purposes.
- D. **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 financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

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2. Responsibilities for Implementing Guidelines with the School

- A. Administration is responsible for informing staff about Internet guidelines and for providing training and support in the appropriate and effective use of the Internet. Information on guidelines will also be included in staff handbooks. The relevance of other guidelines such as those for copyright and for the selection of materials will be included in these efforts.
- B. Administration is responsible for informing parents about Internet guidelines through formal methods of communications such as letters, school newsletters, or handbooks.
- C. Administration is responsible for evaluating tools which can potentially assist staff in implementing guidelines.
- D. Staff is responsible for supporting guidelines by modeling them at all times, providing a supervised setting for Internet use, and by fully informing students about the acceptable use guidelines. Information on guidelines will also be included in student handbooks. Additional strategies such as room arrangements which aid supervision and the posting of guidelines near computers are encouraged.
- E. Students are responsible for following guidelines at all times once they have been informed of them. Failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action.

3. Guidelines

- A. Staff will plan and coordinate the use of the Internet for educational purposes only. The Internet will be used to achieve objectives in ways which other resources can not provide.
- B. Staff will plan Internet use in ways which closely guide student experience. For example, staff may pre-select valuable Web sites, limit links to those found only in certain Web directories, review e-mail messages sent to on-line project participants, or directly assist students in building effective keyword searches. Guidance in using the Internet will aim to connect students with sites and sources which meet the person's educational needs and the district's expectation for selection of appropriate instructional material. The following is to be posted on Web sites: Incoming messages may be received by more than the addressee. Please be aware of this when communicating with our Web sites.

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- C. Staff will instruct students in the skills needed to effectively use the Internet including those skills needed to critically evaluate and select information sources which are relevant and authoritative.
- D. Staff will supervise access as closely as possible. This includes frequent review of what students are using and if deemed necessary, a check of the sites which students have accessed for electronic mail which has been sent or received. The following is to be posted on Web sites: Incoming and outgoing messages may be viewed by more than the addressee. Please be aware of this when communicating with our Web sites. Students are responsible for doing only those activities approved by staff.
- E. Activities which require the thoughtful use of accessed information to construct knowledge and understanding will be emphasized.
- F. Activities below must always require advance planning and study by staff:
 - 1. Use of Internet relay chat or real time conferencing through the use of text and/or video. This type of forum should be accessed only to connect with other classes or individuals for prearranged dialogue for a curriculum purpose. Students will not be involved in live chats at random.
 - 2. Subscription to an electronic mailing (listserv).
 - 3. Access to newsgroups (usenets).
 - 4. Downloading of files and other freeware/shareware.
- G. Certain activities and behaviors are not permitted. These are:
 - 1. Accessing materials or using e-mail for non-educational purposes or for purposes which are not approved in advance by the staff member in charge.
 - 2. Use of obscene, inflammatory, harassing, threatening, or abusive language or images.
 - 3. Knowingly access materials which are obscene or degrade groups or individuals.
 - 4. Use of school accounts for personal messages or business including financial transactions, advertising, or other commercial activity.

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- G. Certain activities and behaviors are not permitted. These are: (continued)
 - 5. Downloading and/or installing software or operating programs without prior approval of the Principal.
 - 6. Disruption of network use by others.
 - 7. Tampering with data and files being used by others.
 - 8. Access of the Internet using students' personal or family accounts without advanced written parent/guardian authorization.
 - 9. Use or transaction of materials which violates copyright laws.
- H. Information regarding passwords or confidential log-in procedures will be maintained by staff who will approve and generally initiate student log-in. Staff and students will be advised that passwords do not ensure complete security and that the Board of Education reserves the right to bypass a password whenever necessary, at the Board's discretion, to safeguard the hardware and software or ensure only proper uses of the system.
- I. Students will be instructed that, if they inadvertently access objectionable (obscene, abusive, harassing, belligerent) materials, they must report this immediately to the staff member in charge.
- J. Student users will use discretion when posting personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes name, school telephone, school address, work address, etc.

4. Role of Parents

- A. Parents will be informed about Internet use guidelines and will also be encouraged to discuss responsible use with their children. Parents will be encouraged to contact identified staff to ask for further information about guidelines.
- B. The District Acceptable Use Policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material on the Internet, some of which may not be fitting with the particular values of the families of students. It is not possible for the District to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, the District recognizes that parents bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to their child(ren). The District will encourage parents to specify to their children what materials are and are not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the District system.

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- C. Although implementation of guidelines will significantly minimize the possibility of unacceptable transmissions, the District will provide parents with the opportunity to indicate that they do not wish their child to have Internet access at school. Parents will be notified of this option and they can request the attached form which exempts their child from use of the Internet.
- D. Parents are responsible for monitoring their students use of the Internet, in accordance with this stated policy, when accessing the system from home. Prior approval for accessing the system at home must be granted by appropriate school personnel in advance.

5. District Web Site

- A. **District Web Site.** The District may from time-to-time establish a Web site and develop Web pages that will present information about the District. The Technology Specialist, or his/her appointee will be designated the Webmaster, responsible for maintaining the District Web site.
- B. **School or Class Web Pages.** School and classes may establish Web pages that present information about the school or class activities. The Principal will designate an individual to be responsible for managing the school Web site. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class site.
- C. **Student Web Pages.** With the advanced approval of the Principal, students may establish personal Web pages. The Principal 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 shall not be attributed to the School District."
- D. **Student Extracurricular Organization Web Pages.** With the advanced approval of the Principal, extracurricular organizations may establish Web pages. The Principal 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 student-produced material. Organization Web pages must include the following notice: "This is a student extracurricular organization Web page. Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the School District."

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6. Future Developments

- A. It is recognized that technology is changing rapidly and that advances in the area of telecommunications will necessitate future modification of guidelines. The District will look to the Technology Action Planning Team for regular review of procedures and for recommendations which will keep guidelines current with both technological and curricular developments.

7. Internet Safety

- A. Each District computer with Internet access shall have a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices.
- B. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan and administrative regulation to address the following:
- (1) Limiting student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials;
 - (2) Student safety and security when using electronic communications;
 - (3) Limiting unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities; and
 - (4) Limiting unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information.

- C. *For districts participating in the federal E-Rate program:*

The District recognizes its responsibility to educate students regarding appropriate behavior on social networking and chat room sites about cyberbullying. Therefore, students shall be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

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Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

Public Act 95-143, An Act Concerning Harassment by Computer and Possession of Child Pornography;

53a-261 Computer related offenses

Children's Internet Protection Act, P.L. 106-554.

Public Law 110-385 Broadband Data Improvement Act/Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act

Policy adopted:
Policy revised:
Policy revised:

April 26, 2001
October 24, 2002
June 18, 2009

MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Marlborough, Connecticut

MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Marlborough, Connecticut

INTERNET USE EXEMPTION FORM

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Dear _____,

This communication is in response to your request to exempt your child from the use of the Internet as part of an instructional experience.

We believe that the Internet provides valuable sources of information and powerful tools for communication. Our District guidelines for Internet access cover acceptable school uses and outline responsibilities for staff and students. However, we also recognize your right to exempt your son/daughter from the use of this telecommunication network.

Sincerely,

TO: _____ Principal

FROM: _____ Parent/Guardian

DATE: _____

I wish to have my son/daughter _____ exempted from use of the Internet.