

Acceptable Use Of The Internet

The Elbert County School System is pleased to offer its students access to the internet. The internet is an electronic highway connecting hundreds of thousands of computers and millions of individual users all over the world. The computer technology allows our students and staff to access and use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups around the world, and significantly expand their available information base. Students and faculty are also able to use the school system's computer resources to share ideas and information with others via the Internet. The Internet has become, and will continue to be, an integral part of our society as well a tool for life-long learning.

The purpose of school system-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. Students will be guided toward topics which have been matched to specific learning objectives rather than being allowed to "surf" the Internet. Even with such steps to ensure that Internet resources are used only for purposes consistent with approved curricula, students may be able to search for and access materials which have not been evaluated by staff. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are inaccurate, defamatory, illegal, or potentially offensive to some people. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet which could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent or guardian would be liable.

Before obtaining Internet access, students must be aware of their responsibilities and of the guidelines governing the network environment. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Elbert County School System. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will always be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and insure that users are acting responsibly.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

1. to violate any local, state, or federal statute;
2. to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of any individual or organization;
3. to access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission;

4. to violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission;
5. to access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;
6. to transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language.

Using Elbert County School System's computers to violate system policy or rules will result in loss of computer privileges. Additional disciplinary action may be taken in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior.

Computer network use is also governed by federal and state laws which specify punitive legal actions that can be taken, as well as terms of imprisonment and/or financial fines that may be imposed by the courts for conviction of computer related crimes. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.