

NEW BOSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

EHAA

COMPUTER SECURITY, E-MAIL AND INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS

The District has established this policy with regard to access and disclosure of electronic data composed, stored, sent, or received by employees or students using the District computer system. This policy is designed to protect the safety and security of the District's computer systems including e-mail and Internet use.

The District intends to enforce the rules set forth below and reserves the right to change these rules at any time.

1. The computer hardware system, software and e-mail system are owned by the District, and all messages or data composed, stored, sent, or received using the system are and remain the property of the District. They are not the property of the employee.
2. The computer and e-mail system is to be used for business purposes only. Personal business is unauthorized and should not be conducted using the system.
3. The electronic mail system may not be used to solicit, advocate or promote for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job related solicitations.
4. The District prohibits discriminatory, harassing, or offensive materials in any form of media. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, or any other comments that offensively address someone's age, sex, race, creed, religion, color, marital status, familial status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
5. The electronic mail system shall not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials without prior authorization from the Director of Technology or designees.
6. The District reserves, and intends to exercise without prior notice, the right to read, review, audit, intercept, access or disclose any and all information on an employee's computer system or messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose, even if coded or passworded.
7. The confidentiality of any message or data should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. The use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality, or that the District will not retrieve it. All passwords for District devices and accounts must be disclosed upon request of the Director of Technology and Superintendent.
8. Any communications created, sent, or retrieved using e-mail may be read by individuals other than the intended recipient.
9. Notwithstanding the District's right to retrieve and monitor any e-mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any e-mail that is not sent to them. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval by the Superintendent or Director of Technology.

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10. Any employee who violates this policy or uses the computer system or electronic mail system for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
11. The District has the authority to terminate or limit access to any program at any time.
12. Personal equipment cannot be used on the system unless pre-authorized by the Director of Technology or their designee(s).
13. The District will take all necessary measures to maintain student privacy relative to the District's website, online information and storage of both staff and student personally identifiable information, as required by state and federal law.

Additional rules governing electronic communications:

All School District employees are reminded that they are professionals who serve as role models for students and should therefore refrain from any communication, electronic or otherwise, which undermines their effectiveness as employees of an educational enterprise. School District employees must maintain appropriate boundaries between students and themselves at all times. School District employees who violate this Policy may face discipline and/or dismissal in accordance with other District Policies and/or collective bargaining agreements.

School District employees are prohibited from engaging in any electronic communication that violates the law, collective bargaining agreements, NH Education Department (NHED) Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct or School Board Policies. Accessing social networking websites, chatrooms, and blogs, and using any computers or any mobile device to send inappropriate communications (such as text or instant messages) during school hours is prohibited. The School District also discourages its employees from engaging in the following problematic conduct as such conduct may be immoral or illegal and/or demonstrate lack of appropriate boundaries that may lead to discipline or dismissal:

- Inviting students to be "friends" through an Internet site or accepting such invitations from students.
- Knowingly socializing with students on social networking websites, apps, chatrooms, blogs and other websites including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, Tumblr, X (formerly known as Twitter), Tiktok and other platforms deemed inappropriate by the Director of Technology or their designee(s).
- Communicating with students via e-mail, instant message, text message, or other electronic means in an unprofessional, inappropriate, or offensive manner.
- Creating, possessing, managing, or having a website that contains inappropriate images, video, text or other information or links to such information.
- Using the Internet, e-mail, instant message, text message or other electronic means to disparage or ridicule students in a manner that is disruptive to the operation of the school or is defamatory in nature. (RSA 189:66-V Student Information Protection and Privacy)

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All District employees are reminded that personal information posted on the Internet is not truly private as it creates a permanent record that may be retrieved and retained, and thus any expectation of privacy may be unwarranted.

Reference:

Policy GBEF School District Networks and Internet Access for Staff

New Hampshire Education Department (NHED) Code of Conduct for Educational Professionals

New Hampshire Education Department (NHED) Code of Ethics for Educational Professionals

Legal References:

RSA 189:68-a, Student Online Personal Information

RSA 189:66-V – Student Information Protection and Privacy

RSA 194:3-d, School District Computer Networks

Proposed: 02/21/2024

Adopted: 05/08/2024