

Technology Use Guidelines for Students for 2024-2025

Purpose

To establish clear guidelines for all students who may have or are granted access to the Bedford County Public Schools' ("BCPS") computer System.

Definitions

"Computer system" includes, but is not limited to hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices; printers; laptop and desktop computers; tablets; smartphones; optical disks; tape drivers; servers; mainframe; personal electronic devices brought as part of the *Bring Your Own Device ("BYOD")* program; all peripherals, digital cameras, document cameras, interactive whiteboards/panels, and projectors; internal and external network connections; email systems; social media accounts; cloud or other online services offered through or operated by BCPS; and any other internal or external networks and/or services that BCPS utilizes.

"Division personnel," "employee," or "staff" means any person employed by the Bedford County School Board.

"Guest" means any member of the Bedford County community or other individual who is granted access to the BCPS computer system.

"Parent" means biological parent, relative, guardian, or other adult who has physical and/or legal control and responsibility for a minor (child) under the age of eighteen years.

"Student" means any person currently enrolled in Bedford County Public Schools. This includes students who are otherwise adults enrolled in any program sponsored by Bedford County Public Schools

"User" means any person who has access to or has permission to use the BCPS computer system. User includes all guests, division personnel, employees, staff, parents, and students.

Statement of Expectations

Students may gain access to the computer system for educational purposes or another legitimate purpose as determined by the classroom teacher. When using the computer system, whether on or off school grounds, students shall follow all applicable School Board policies and procedures, including this Technology Use Guidelines (TUG), the Acceptable Computer System Use policy (AUP), and the Student Code of Conduct. The relevant policies, procedures, and rules are applicable whether students are online or in the physical school building. Students shall not engage in any bullying or cyberbullying as defined in the Code of Student Conduct.

All use of the BCPS computer system shall be consistent with the School Board's mission: Bedford County Public Schools will provide equal opportunities to enable all students to think critically, collaborate, create, communicate, and become productive citizens. The BCPS computer system is maintained for the mutual benefit of all users, and adherence to this TUG is necessary for continued access to the computer system.

The use of the BCPS computer system is a privilege, not a right, and the TUG and AUP are designed to establish clear guidelines for all students who have been granted access to the computer system. Students' use of the computer system shall be in furtherance of the division's educational objectives and in accordance with this TUG, AUP, the Code of Student Conduct, and any other policy and/or procedure referenced below.

Internet Safety Instruction and Community Outreach

The need for Internet safety instruction and community outreach programs is assessed by building administrators, teachers, and other division personnel, all working together toward educating all stakeholders within our community.

As set forth in Va. Code § 22.1-70.2, BCPS shall provide to all students (K-12) Internet safety training. This includes, but is not limited to, intellectual property rights, online predators, illegal downloading from the Internet, and "sexting." Internet safety instruction programs may call on School Resource Officers to assist in the explanation of the following: legal definitions, charges that may be filed against an individual in specific situations, and lasting legal consequences. All students are expected to actively practice proper network etiquette.

Safety Measures and Limitations

To protect students, software is installed on the BCPS network to filter or block any content deemed inappropriate or harmful by BCPS, which includes but is not limited to child pornography as set out in Va. Code § 18.2-374.1:1 or as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256; obscenity as defined in Va. Code § 18.2-372 or 18 U.S.C. § 1460; material that the school division deems to be harmful to juveniles as defined in Va. Code § 18.2-390, material that is harmful to minors as defined in 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(7)(G), and material that is otherwise inappropriate for minors including social networking spaces. Software filters are limited to blocking content accessed through the BCPS network, and will not prevent access to content when non-BCPS networks are utilized. Cell phones are one example of technology that does not utilize the BCPS network and will not benefit from the software filter. Students shall not rely on software filters to prevent inappropriate website access.

As new technologies emerge, the educational value and ease of classroom integration will be evaluated concurrently by the BCPS Technology Staff, the BCPS Instructional Department, the BCPS Special Services Department, building technology committees, and the TUG Committee. Recommendations for amendment to the TUG and AUP will be made by the TUG Committee to the governing School Board.

Data Backup and Network Security

BCPS makes every effort to provide reliable file storage through Google Drive; however, since no storage solution is 100% reliable, each user is responsible for backing up their individual files.

Users shall not expect any data stored on the BCPS computer system to be private. Digital communication and files stored on the BCPS computer system are regarded as property of BCPS. Authorized administrators may, without reason or prior notice, review files and documents including, but not limited to, email, documents, and logs, to ensure users are acting in accordance with this TUG, and to maintain system integrity.

Current security measures include firewalls, Internet filters, virus protection, and virus monitoring devices. The BCPS Technology staff and the Supervisor of Information Technology Operations evaluate the security of the BCPS computer system to identify security threats daily. Data security and network security are constantly reviewed and, when necessary, adjustments and modifications are made to the system as issues arise.

Any user who identifies a security issue or problem shall immediately notify the building administration, the Technology Staff, the Supervisor of Information Technology Operations. The intentional destruction or vandalism of the BCPS computer system by any means or the intentional breach of the BCPS LAN or WAN is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of cellular hotspots, personal access points, VPN, and/or proxy applications to circumvent the BCPS Internet filtering system. Any violation of this TUG may result in loss of computer system privileges and may also result in appropriate disciplinary action, as determined by the School Board, or legal action.

Reliability of the Computer System

Technology, while extremely valuable, is sometimes unreliable. The School Board makes no warranties for the computer system it provides. The School Board shall not be liable for any damages to the user from use of the BCPS computer system, including loss of data, non-delivery or missed delivery of information, or service interruptions. The School Board denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the BCPS computer system. Users are cautioned to prepare for and guard against instances of technology unreliability. Users agree to indemnify the School Board for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by the School Board relating to or arising out of any violation of this TUG.

1:1 Device Program

BCPS provides each student with a device to be used as an instructional tool. Student devices are provided to enhance instruction and learning; they are not intended to replace instruction. The 1:1 device program addresses this mission of BCPS and ensures that students can access what they need when they need it – whether in the classroom, at home, or in any public area that has an Internet connection. Web-filtering software will filter content, whether the 1:1 device is on or off the BCPS network. For more information, please refer to the [1:1 Device Handbook](#).

Google Domain

BCPS uses Google Workspace for Education under a private BCPS Google domain. Google Workspace for Education is a set of education productivity tools from Google including, but not limited to, Gmail (grades 6-12), Calendar, Docs, and Drive. At BCPS, students will use their Google Workspace for Education accounts to complete assignments, communicate with their teachers, sign into their Chromebooks, and learn 21st-century digital citizenship skills.

BCPS provides a Google Domain account to students as a tool to meet education expectations while fulfilling their academic and school-sponsored extracurricular activities. A Google Domain account is not private and may be monitored and accessed by BCPS. Unauthorized access to a Google Domain account by any student is prohibited. Students are prohibited from sharing their Google account access information (logins and passwords) with other students. Students are prohibited from soliciting or using the account access information of others. Students shall be held personally responsible for all content in

their Google Domain accounts stored in Gmail, Docs, Drive, etc. When communicating with BCPS staff through Gmail, students shall use the BCPS staff member's official email address. Downloading any file attached to an electronic message is prohibited unless the student is certain of that message's authenticity and the nature of the file.

YouTube is offered to students through the Google Domain. A limited number of videos appropriate for school use are available in YouTube Restricted Mode. This is a feature through Google that can help screen out potentially mature content. Videos that are not available but have an educational purpose may be approved through BCPS teachers and staff.

BCPS provides email access to students in grades 6-12 as an educational tool. This email is not private and may be monitored and accessed by BCPS staff. Students in grades 6-8 will be able to email only within the BCPS domain, sending and receiving email from an email address outside of the BCPS domain will not be granted. Personal email accounts may not be used by students to communicate with BCPS staff. Unauthorized access to an email account by any user is prohibited. Users shall be held personally liable for the content of any email they create. Downloading any file attached to an email is prohibited unless the user is certain of its authenticity and the nature of the file. Prohibited uses of BCPS student-provided email accounts include but are not limited to:

- Sending personal and confidential information;
- Swearing, using vulgarities, or using any other inappropriate language in any email transmission (Disciplinary action, as outlined in this policy, may be imposed);
- Sending or forwarding chain letters;
- Spamming (sending unwanted, unsolicited emails to large groups of people, or everyone in your address book);
- Sending or sharing documents with large groups of people for anything other than an educational purpose to include selling products or offering outside merchandise;
- Subscribing to mail or notification lists (e.g. signing up or creating accounts for anything not school related);
- Sending emails with false or defamatory information; and
- Sending emails that are intended to harass, insult, or are personal or discriminatory attacks on another user.

Electronic & Digital Published Media

BCPS may provide digital tools to aid students and staff in fulfilling their educational and workplace responsibilities. When authoring these digital works, users shall keep in mind that the end product shall support the educational objectives of BCPS. Every member of the BCPS community has the responsibility to maintain and enhance the division's public image and to use all digital tools in a productive manner. Unacceptable use includes but is not limited to:

- Posting personal and/or confidential information;
- Swearing, using vulgarities, or using any language inappropriate for a school setting;
- Transmitting false or defamatory information;
- Creating any end product intended to harass, insult, or launch a personal or discriminatory attack on an individual or group; and
- Posting electronic media for any other purpose that is illegal, against School Board Policies, or contrary to the best interest of BCPS.

Social Media

Social media includes Internet-based applications and mobile technologies that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Examples of commonly used social media tools include, but are not limited to: blogs, message boards, chat groups, instant messaging, personal news updates, and music/video sharing (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Remind, YouTube, and Twitter). Utilization of social media on the BCPS computer system is permitted only by division personnel for professional development purposes; as a tool to foster closer community/school relations (e.g. the creation of a school Facebook Page); and as an educational tool with students over the age of 13 years.

Any use of social media must be in conformance with this TUG. Staff and students are cautioned that even non-school division computer system use of social media that violates this TUG, the AUP, any School Board policies or procedures, the Code of Student Conduct, or creates a foreseeable risk of causing a substantial disruption to the work and discipline of the school, may result in disciplinary action. Students should only interact with staff through social media sites created for educational purposes. Students should not engage staff through personal social media sites.

Social media in the classroom shall be used with students under the age of 13 years only where allowed by law (e.g., falls within the parameters of COPPA, CIPA, and PPRA) or when BCPS has approved usage division-wide (e.g., the BCPS Google Domain, a private BCPS learning management tool) and with parental permission.

Examples of Acceptable Technology Use

1. In accordance with teacher directives in the instructional setting, including:
 - Research
 - Organization of materials
 - Brainstorming
 - Composition
 - Note-taking
 - Instructional software and Internet activities
 - Projects
 - Correspondence
 - Career Development
 - Discussion Forums
 - Electronic Collaboration
2. Comply with fair-use laws and copyright regulations while accessing the Internet
 - Understand, recognize, and respect the intellectual property of others;
 - Present accurate information when collaboratively gathering or sharing information (e.g. avoid Wiki vandalism);
 - Ethical gathering and/or presentation of information (e.g. avoid plagiarism, provide correct attribution, follow Creative Commons Law); and
 - Cite all sources.
3. School-sponsored email
 - Use for legitimate BCPS academic and curricular activities communications;
 - Keep passwords and logins confidential and share them only with trusted adults;
 - Only access your own account;
 - Send messages that contain content in accordance with this policy and the Code of Student Conduct;

- Immediately report messages that violate this policy or the Code of Student Conduct to administration; and
- Download attachments only when the user is certain the attachment is safe for the Computer System.

4. The Principles of the Computer System Community:

- Exercise polite and proper network etiquette (the acceptable behavior the Internet community expects its citizens to follow);
- Use the BCPS network for educational activities;
- Respect both your own privacy and the privacy of others by not giving out personal information;
- Respect the rights of others by not wasting network resources; and
- Report to a trusted adult any material that makes you feel scared or uncomfortable.

Examples of Unacceptable Use

Students MAY NOT engage in any conduct that violates this TUG, the AUP, or the Code of Student Conduct. For example, a student MAY NOT:

1. Bypass or attempt to bypass the BCPS filtering software;
2. Swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language in any electronic communication;
3. Access web pages or Internet content that is inconsistent with the educational objectives of BCPS;
4. Participate in cyberbullying which is defined as the use of electronic media to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group with the intention of physically or psychologically intimidating others;
5. Use the network/Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright law, violation of contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any federal, state, or local law;
6. Send, receive, view, or download illegal or otherwise prohibited material via the BCPS computer system;
7. Install or download media, without authorization, to any BCPS or non-BCPS electronic devices while connected to the BCPS network;
8. Use the BCPS computer system for private financial or commercial gain or advertising;
9. Use resources wastefully (e.g. bandwidth, file space, paper, and ink/toner) or fail to respect the BCPS resource limits;
10. Gain unauthorized access to resources or entities;
11. Post material authored or created by another without their consent;
12. Submit, post, publish, or display any obscene, profane, threatening, illegal, or other inappropriate material;
13. Use the BCPS computer system while access privileges are suspended or revoked;
14. Vandalize the BCPS computer system, including, but not limited to, modifying or rearranging keyboards, individual keycaps, any other peripheral equipment, or destroying data by creating or spreading viruses and/or by any other means;
15. Forge, intercept, or interfere with electronic mail messages;
16. Post personal contact information about oneself or others including, without limitation, name, address, telephone, school/work address, without the prior written approval of the school principal or other designee of BCPS;
17. Use the BCPS computer system to disrupt others;
18. Read, modify, or delete data owned by others;
19. Attempt to modify settings or personalize devices owned by BCPS;

20. Violate any School Board policy or procedure or the Code of Student Conduct while using the division's computer system; and
21. Utilize artificial intelligence (AI) to generate content and assert ownership, or to fabricate and disseminate false or deceptive information with the aim of causing harm, whether by accident or with deliberate intent.

Recommended Dispositions in the Event of Student Misconduct

Students shall be held accountable to the appropriate Level of Consequence chart found in the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

TUG Review and Revision

At a minimum, this TUG will be reviewed on an annual basis. Additional review may be conducted if warranted under the circumstances.

In addition to the ***Technology Use Guidelines***, individuals need to review BCPS Policy IIBEA "[Acceptable Computer System Use](#)" in BoardDoc.