



6415

Internet and Educational Network Use

Policy 6415

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Review Dates:

I. PURPOSE

Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and other resources while exchanging ideas with people around the world. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. It is an important part of a student's education to learn skills needed to be a responsible user of Internet and internet tools, including such things as discussion forums, blogs and wikis. Students need to learn safe guidelines for using social networking sites that are available outside of the school environment, and the District will partner with parents to teach those guidelines. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe and appropriate use of the Internet for educational purposes and to comply with federal law.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The District purpose of offering access to the Internet to students and employees is more specific than providing them with general access. The District has a limited educational purpose in providing access to the Internet to students and employees.
- B. Students and Staff are expected to use the Internet to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the District and its policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private, personal account on another system may not be acceptable on the District's limited purpose network. Appropriate uses include, but are not limited to:
 1. participating in distance learning activities;
 2. using resources for classroom activities;
 3. asking questions of and consulting with experts;
 4. communicating with other students and teachers about educational matters
 5. conducting the business of the District;
 6. locating resources to meet their educational and personal information needs, and
 7. professional or career development activities.
- C. Use of the District system and access to the use of the Internet in school are privileges, not a right. Misuse of the system will subject the actor to discipline which will depend on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations. Discipline of employees for misuse shall follow district processes for progressive employee discipline, up to and including termination. Discipline of students for misuse shall be in accordance with the District Behavior Standards policy and school rules and may include:
 1. suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges;
 2. suspension or removal from instruction;

3. requiring payment for damages or repairs;
 4. civil or criminal liability under applicable laws.
- D. All staff are expected to use technology and participate in the necessary training for the proper performance of their duties.
- E. Staff training on internet use, internet resources and the skills to access them will be provided by the District.
- F. The District expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use of these tools.
- G. The District shall inform parents of the individual student's responsibility to use Internet resources in an ethical and educationally appropriate manner.
- H. The District shall use a filter to limit the Internet environment to provide access to the most appropriate educational sites and materials for students and staff.
1. Students, staff and parents are advised that some Internet sites may contain inappropriate or offensive material. The school environment and District provided access will not be the only access to electronic information.
 2. School administrators and staff shall not condone the use of inappropriate materials and shall not permit usage of those materials in the school environment.
 3. Students who knowingly use such materials in school will be subject to discipline according to the discipline policies of the district and the individual school.
 4. Staff who knowingly use such materials in school shall be subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination, pursuant to the terms of their collective bargaining agreement or contract.
- I. While the District may provide hardware with internet connection capabilities to staff or students, the District does not install software on such devices to filter out inappropriate internet based materials. Parents shall be informed that use of these devices by students outside of district buildings through other internet connections is not filtered, and responsibility for monitoring student use is the parent's.
- J. The District shall provide instruction to students regarding the proper use of the internet, including instruction in, but not limited to:
1. appropriately interacting with others on social media;
 2. appropriately interacting with others in chat rooms;
 3. appropriately posting information on the internet or on individual websites;
 4. appropriate use of and limitations of free speech on the internet;
 5. prohibition of cyberbullying, awareness of signs of cyberbullying behavior and

- assistance available from the school and District and elsewhere to students who believe themselves or others to be targets of cyberbullying behaviors; and
6. appropriate use of copyrighted and non-copyrighted materials found on the internet.
- K. In order to maintain the integrity of the District provided network, and to improve productivity and academic excellence, all hardware and software purchases or other acquisitions must be approved by the Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee.
- L. By authorizing the use of the District system, the District does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in the files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the District system.
1. Routine maintenance and monitoring may lead to a discovery of a violation of this policy, of another district policy, or the law.
 2. An individual search or investigation will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or District policy.
 3. Parents have the right at any time to review or investigate the contents of their child's files and e-mail files.
 4. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
 5. District employees and other staff should be aware that the District retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and e-mail files. District employees and other staff should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the District system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Superintendent is authorized to promulgate regulations to implement this policy.
- B. School media specialists, classroom teachers and classroom staff have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the critical thinking skills needed
 1. to discriminate among information sources;
 2. to identify information appropriate to their age and development levels; and
 3. to evaluate and use information to meet their educational goals.
- C. The Board of Directors shall conduct an annual review of this policy due to the rapid changes in the development of the Internet and web-based communications.

Legal References:

15 USC §6501 *et seq.* (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)

17 USC §101 *et seq.* (Copyrights)
20 USC §6751 *et seq.* (Enhancing Education through Technology Act of 2001)
47 USC §254 (Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 [CIPA])
47 CFR §54.520 (FCC Rules implementing CIPA) *see especially* §54.520 (c)(1)(i)
Minn. Stat. §125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)
Minn. Stat. §125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969)
United States v. American Library Association, 539 U.S.194, 123 S.Ct.2297, 56 L.Ed.2d 221
(2003)
Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist., 412 F.Supp.2d 502 (2006)
J.S. v. Bethlehem Area Sch. Dist., 807 A.2d 847 (Pa. 2002)

Cross References:

MPS Policy 1040 (Student and Staff Data Protection)
MPS Policy 4002 (Harassment and Violence Prohibition)
MPS Policy 5000 (Equal Education Opportunity)
MPS Policy 5200 (Behavior Standards and Code of Conduct)
MPS Policy 5201 (Bullying and Hazing Prohibition)

MPS Regulation 6415 A (Internet Use Agreements and Limitations of District Liability)
MPS Regulation 6415 B (Internet, E-mail and Network Rules for Student Use)
MPS Regulation 6415 C (Internet, E-mail and Network Rules for Staff Use)
MPS Regulation 6415 D (Web Page Development)