

## **Smyrna School District Computing and Internet Board Policy**

### **A. Purpose**

1. Smyrna School District is providing employees and students with access to the district's wide area network, which includes Internet access and access to the district's electronic communication system.
2. The district system has a limited educational purpose. The purpose of the district system is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people from throughout the world. Additionally, the system will be used to increase district intra-communication, enhance productivity, and assist district employees in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers. The district system will also assist the district in sharing information with the local community, including parents, social service agencies, government agencies, and businesses.
3. Users may not use the district system for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services or purchasing goods or services for personal use. District acquisition policies will be followed for district purchase of goods or services through the district system.
4. Users may not use the system for political lobbying. District employees and students in class activities may use the system to communicate with their elected representatives and to express their opinion on political issues.
5. The term "educational purpose" includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional and career development.

### **B. District Responsibilities**

1. The Superintendent will serve as the coordinator to oversee the district system and will work with other state organizations, as necessary.
2. The Supervisor of Technology will serve as the district level coordinator for the district system, will ensure that a broad selection of training activities are available and ensure that policies and handbooks regarding technology remain up-to-date and accessible.
3. The building principal will serve as the building-level coordinator for the district system, will approve building-level activities, ensure teachers receive proper

training in the use of the system and the requirements of this policy, establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of students using the system, maintain executed user agreements, and be responsible for interpreting the District Acceptable Use Policy at the building level.

4. The District Technology Specialist will establish a process for setting up individual and class accounts, set quotas for disk usage on the system, establish a retention schedule, establish a district virus protection process, and ensure compliance with district software licenses.

#### C. Technical Services Provided through District System

1. E-Mail. E-mail will allow employees and students to communicate with people from throughout the world. Users will also be able to engage in group discussions related to educational subjects. Staff will be assigned accounts. Students will have access to email for educational purposes with the approval of and under the direct supervision of a staff member. Such student access will be via free web-based services, which have been obtained outside the school.
2. World Wide Web. The Web provides access to a wide range of information in the form of text, graphics, photographs, video, and sound, from throughout the world. The Web is a valuable research tool for students and employees.
3. Telnet. Telnet allows the user to log in to remote computers.
4. File Transfer Protocol (FTP). FTP allows users to download large files and computer software. Such downloads will be supervised by a staff member and subject to resource limitations.
5. Newsgroups and Web-based Conferencing. Class projects requiring participation in these activities will be conducted under the supervision of the staff member conducting the class.
6. Blocking Software. The state of Delaware through the Delaware Education Network maintains software designed to block access to certain sites.

#### D. Access to the System

1. Student use of the system will be governed by the Smyrna School District Code of Conduct. Employee use will be governed by employment contracts. The District's Acceptable Use Policy, set forth in Section L, outlines policies specific to computing and network use. All users will also be governed by state network policies.
2. World Wide Web. All district employees and students will have access to the Web through the district's networked computers. No agreement will be required;

however, parents may specifically request that their child(ren) not be provided such access by notifying the district in writing in accordance with district practice.

3. Individual E-mail Accounts for Students. The district will not provide individual e-mail accounts for students.
4. Individual E-mail Accounts for District Employees. District employees will be provided with an individual account.
5. Guest Accounts. Guests may receive an individual account with the approval of the Superintendent if there is a specific district-related purpose requiring such access. Use of the system by a guest must be specifically limited to the district-related purpose.

#### E. Parental Notification and Responsibility

1. The district will notify the parents about the district network and the policies governing its use.
2. The District Acceptable Use Policy (see Section L) contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be fitting with the particular values of the families of the students. It is not practically 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 children. The district will encourage parents to specify to their child(ren) what material is and is not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the district system.
3. The district will provide students and parents with guidelines for student safety while using the Internet.

#### F. 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.

#### G. Due Process

1. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning to or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the district system.
2. In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the District Acceptable Use Policy, the alleged infraction will be handled in accordance with the Smyrna School District Code of Conduct.
3. Employee violations of the District Acceptable Use Policy will be handled in accord with the employee contract.
4. The superintendent may terminate the account privileges of a guest user by providing notice to the user.

#### H. Search and Seizure

1. System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the district system.
2. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that the user has or is violating the District Acceptable Use Policy, the Smyrna School District Code of Conduct, employee contracts, or the law.
3. Searches will be conducted if there is suspicion that the law or the Smyrna School District Code of Conduct has been violated.
4. District employees should be aware that their personal files are discoverable under law.

#### I. Copyright and Plagiarism

1. District policies on copyright will govern the use of material accessed through the district system. Because the extent of copyright protection of certain works found on the Internet is unclear, employees will make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work if their use of the material has the potential of being considered an infringement. Teachers will instruct students to respect copyright and to request permission when appropriate.
2. District policies on plagiarism will govern use of material accessed through the district system. Teachers will instruct students in appropriate research and citation practices.

#### J. Academic Freedom, Selection of Material, Student Rights to Free Speech

1. Board Policy 5100, Student Rights and Responsibilities, will govern the use of the Internet.
2. When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will select material that is appropriate in light of the age of the students and that is relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will preview the materials and sites they require or recommend students access to determine the appropriateness of the material contained on or accessed through the site. Teachers will provide guidelines and lists of resources to assist their students in channeling their research activities effectively and properly. Teachers will assist their students in developing the skills to ascertain the truthfulness of information, distinguish fact from opinion, and engage in discussions about controversial issues while demonstrating tolerance and respect for those who hold divergent views.

#### K. District Web Site

1. District Web Site. The district will establish a Web site and will develop Web pages that will present information about the district. The Superintendent or his/her designee will establish a process for governance of the district's Web activities. At the discretion of the Superintendent, officially recognized district-wide organizations may also publish web pages on the district server.
2. School or Class Web Pages. Schools and classes may establish Web pages that present information about the school or class activities. The building principal will designate an individual to be responsible for managing the school Web site. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class site. Class sites may include individual student or group work. Parent permission must be obtained to publish student names or photos on the Web.
3. Extracurricular Organization Web Pages. With the approval of the building principal, extracurricular organizations may establish Web pages using district-provided web space. The principal or his/her appointee will establish a process and criteria for the establishment and posting of material on these pages. Material presented on the organization Web page must relate specifically to organization activities. Included materials must adhere to all other regulations and laws. 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 district."

## L. District Acceptable Use Policy

As stated in section D.1, existing policies govern student and employees behavior. The following uses of the district system are considered unacceptable (See Section G, Due Process):

### 1. Personal Safety (Restrictions are for students only)

- a. Users will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people unless such posting involves valid applications for college or employment application and is approved by an appropriate staff member. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, work address, etc.
- b. Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without their parent's approval and participation.
- c. Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

### 2. Illegal Activities

- a. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the district system or to any other computer system through the district system, or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
- b. Users will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.
- c. Users will not use the district system to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of person, etc.

### 3. System Security

- a. Users are responsible for the use of their individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide their password to another person, and no user should remain logged on to a workstation when not in a position to supervise the use of that workstation.

- b. Users will immediately notify the school's system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Users will not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
  - c. Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the district virus protection procedures if they download software.
4. Inappropriate Language
- a. Restrictions against appropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.
  - b. Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
  - c. Users will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
  - d. Users will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - e. Users will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a user is told by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.
  - f. Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
5. Respect for Privacy
- a. Users will not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.
  - b. Users will not post private information about another person.
6. Respecting Resource Limits
- a. Users will be respectful of the limited system storage resources and will actively manage their files.
  - b. Users will use the system only for educational and professional/career development activities.
  - c. Individual users will only install applications to local hard drives.

- d. Users will not post chain letters or engage in “spamming”. Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
- e. Users will check all downloaded electronic information frequently and delete unwanted material promptly. Users will unsubscribe from mail lists during periods when they will not access their workstations for significant periods of time.
- f. Staff users will subscribe only to discussion group mail lists that are relevant to their education or professional/career development.

#### 7. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- a. Users will not plagiarize electronic works. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or works of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.
- b. Users will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work, including electronic media. If a work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user should follow the expressed requirements. If the user is unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner.

#### 8. Inappropriate Access to Material

- a. Users will not use the district system to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature). For students, a special exception may be made for the purpose of such access to conduct research and access follows the guidelines in section J2. District employees may access the above material only in the context of legitimate research.
- b. If a user inadvertently accesses such information, they should immediately disclose the inadvertent access in a manner specified in the district handbook. This will protect users against an allegation that they have intentionally violated the Acceptable Use Policy.

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