

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Subject: Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy	Date Approved: August 18, 1998 Date Revised: June 18, 2002 Date Effective: July 1, 2002

1. PURPOSE

Computers networked within a school building provide the capability for students and staff to access and share information within that school. The most far-reaching means of sharing and accessing information is through the Internet, a world-wide telecommunications network connecting millions of computer systems. The ability to access and share information via computer, whether across the hall or around the world, will be used by students and staff to further goals and objectives of the Somerset County School system. Knowing how to access information and communicate electronically will be fundamental skills in the world in which our students will be citizens and employees.

2. POLICY

A. Introduction

We live in a global society with resources that are constantly changing and expanding. The staff and students of our school system are provided with internet access through our wide-area network in order to take advantage of the opportunity to access worldwide resources and interact electronically with their peers. This policy will apply to the use of telecommunication technology for all students and staff of the Somerset County school system. This technology includes, but is not limited to, networks, computers, telephones, facsimiles and other wire and wireless equipment. In compliance with Public Law 106-554, The Children's Internet Protection Act and the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, this policy addresses Acceptable Use and Internet Safety for both adults and minors. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all material, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. The school system firmly believes that the value of the information and the interaction available on the worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school system.

B. Web Page Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to any website that references Somerset County Public Schools or any individual school in our system.

- (1) Teachers reserve the right to restrict the posting of student developed materials they deem inappropriate.
- (2) Any items produced by students/staff will not be posted to the internet without their permission. Global permission will be given by checking the appropriate box on the 'Internet Use Agreement' (See Administrative Procedure) .If permission is granted, items will be considered fair use and available to the public.
- (3) Incomplete pages with the message "Under Construction" will be not be posted.
- (4) Items posted to the Internet may not contain photos of individual students and no students in the photo will be identified.
- (5) Items posted to the Internet may contain individual photos of staff members with their permission. Permission will be given by checking the appropriate box on the 'Internet Use Agreement'. Granting permission to use individual photos includes the right to identify the staff member in the photo.
- (6) Items posted to the Internet may not include a students full name. Students must be identified using either their first or last name.

- (7) Items posted to the Internet may contain the full name of staff members with their permission. Permission is given by checking the appropriate box on the 'Internet Use Agreement'. If a staff member does not wish to use their full name they will be identified by using a title and their last name (ex. Mr. Smith).
- (8) Items posted to the Internet may not contain copyrighted material without written consent of the owner.

C. Internet Safety

The Somerset County Public School system certifies that all computers with Internet access will operate with blocking or filtering technology to prevent both adults and minors from accessing controversial materials that are considered to be "obscene", "child pornography", or "harmful to minors". The school system will monitor the online activities of all users, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that users are not accessing inappropriate materials.

All users are advised that access to the Internet may include the potential for access to inappropriate materials. Every user must take the responsibility for his or her use of the network and the Internet and stay away from these sites.

D. Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to use computer communication technology in an ethical, responsible, and legal manner for school related purposes only. The term "school-related purposes" includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited, high-quality self-discovery activities. A signed Internet Use Agreement needs to be on file at the school before any student is permitted access to the Internet. Acceptable Use of the Internet are activities which support teaching and learning See Administrative Procedure

- (1) Students with accounts on the school system network agree not to allow others to use that account and not to violate the right to privacy of others by attempting to access another persons account or files.
 - B) Students will not knowingly spread viruses, violate copyright laws, use unauthorized software, impersonate another user, or attempt to alter system software or hardware configurations.
 - C) Students will not purposely destroy telecommunication equipment, related peripherals or media (disk, CD's, etc).
 - D) Students will not access Chat Rooms in any form unless under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher with prior permission from the building principal.
 - E) Students will honor any limitations placed on the use of information set by the originating source.
 - F) Illegal activities are strictly forbidden. Messages relating to, or in support of, such activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
 - G) Students will be expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of etiquette when using school system resources. These include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - (a) Use of the technology in such a way that will not disrupt the use of the network by others.
 - (b) Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
 - (c) Use appropriate language.
 - (d) Do not waste technology resources.
 - (e) Show respect for and take proper care of all equipment and media.
8. For safety reasons, Students will not reveal anyone's home phone number, address, or other personal information, including their own.

9. Students will not use school system resources to threaten or harass others. Any harassment or inappropriate message encountered should not be responded to and should be reported.

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10. Students will not use school system resources to play computer games, simulations or download any files not in support of the curriculum.

E. School Staff Responsibilities

It is the staff member's responsibility to use computer communication technology, including email, in an ethical, responsible, and legal manner for school-related purposes only. The term "school-related purposes" includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited, high-quality self-discovery activities. A signed Internet Use Agreement needs to be on file at the school before any staff member is permitted access to the Internet. Acceptable Use of the Internet are activities which support teaching and learning. School staff member's have the same access to school system resources as students, plus an individual email account. Staff members must realize that school system email records are not private, the school system has the right to review all email and Internet logs at any time.

See Administrative Procedure

8. Staff with accounts on the school system network agree not to allow others to use that account and not to violate the right to privacy of others by attempting to access another persons account or files.
9. Staff will not knowingly spread viruses, violate copyright laws, use unauthorized software, impersonate another user, or attempt to alter system software or hardware configurations.
10. Staff will not purposely destroy telecommunication equipment, related peripherals or media (disk, CD's, etc).
11. Staff will honor any limitations placed on the use of information set by the originating source.
12. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden. Messages relating to, or in support of, such activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
13. For safety reasons, Staff will not reveal anyone's home phone number, address, or other personal information, including their own.
14. Staff will not use school system resources to threaten or harass others. Any harassment or inappropriate message encountered should not be responded to and should be reported.
15. Staff will not use school system resources to play computer games, simulations or download any files not in support of the curriculum.
16. Staff members making this technology available to their students will also make provisions to ensure that students have the knowledge to:
 - (a) Follow procedures for operating the equipment and accessing information.
 - (b) Follow the rules outlined above under Student Responsibilities.
 - (c) Make judgements about locating and using information that match the learner's instructional level and the learning objectives of the assignment.
 - (d) Discriminate among types of information sources.
 - (e) Apply the same criticism of educational accuracy and suitability used for all educational resources.

Note: If a student is too young to read the Acceptable Use Policy, assistance should be provided by the staff. The purpose of this policy is to provide information not to exclude anyone.

- F. **Consequences of Unacceptable Use** - The use of this technology is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the student/staff's access privilege being revoked or suspended.

Misuse may also subject the student/staff to disciplinary action under individual school building policies and/or Somerset County Board of Education policies. In addition, any illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate agencies.

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G. Liability - Somerset County Public School system provides no expressed or implied warranties for the Internet access it provides. The accuracy and quality of information obtained cannot be guaranteed. The school system will not guarantee the availability of access to the Internet and will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data and interruption of service.

H. Parent Responsibilities - It is expected that parents will support both county and school policies that pertain to the acceptable use of computer communication technology. It is the responsibility of parents to be familiar with this policy regarding the acceptable use for Computer Communication Technology by their children as it pertains to school related purposes. As it is recognized that effective schools are best maintained when the home and the school work jointly.