

Adopted: 3/16/99  
Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

**520.00 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to offer employees, students and other authorized individuals (as determined by school and department administrators) access to a variety of information technology resources, including computer workstations, local area networks, a wide area network, and the Internet.

The intent of this policy is to give an overview of user responsibilities, acceptable, and unacceptable use of information technology resources rather than provide an exhaustive list of such responsibilities, uses, and misuses. The Guidelines for Acceptable Use by Employees and the Guidelines for Acceptable Use by Students contain additional information further describing acceptable use of information technology resources in the Saint Paul Public Schools.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The purpose of Saint Paul Public Schools information technology resources is to advance the school district's educational mission.

The use of the school district information technology resources and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable use of the school district information technology resources, including the Internet, may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws. The consequences will depend on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations.

**III. RESPONSIBILITY OF USE**

The proper use of information technology resources, and the educational value to be gained from proper use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district.

Individual users of Saint Paul Public Schools information technology resources have the responsibility to:

- Comply with all existing Board of Education policies as they may be interpreted to apply to technology resources;
- Find, evaluate, and effectively use information resources;
- Respect the privacy of other users, and not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users without permission;
- Help maintain the security of the district technology resources;
- Recognize and honor the intellectual property rights of others;
- Immediately disclose inadvertent access of unacceptable materials or an unacceptable internet site to an appropriate school district official.

Acceptable use of information technology resources are that which:

- Is consistent with the mission of the Saint Paul Public Schools
- Encourages efficient, cooperative and creative methods to perform the user's job duties or educational tasks;
- Is related to instructional, administrative, and other support activities considered consistent with the mission of the district;
- Is required for authorized and appropriate access to voice, video, and data systems, software or data, both locally and at other sites.

Unacceptable use of information technology resources includes:

- Providing, assisting in, or gaining unauthorized or inappropriate access to the district's technology resources, including any type of voice, video or data information server;
- Activities that interfere with the ability of students/staff members to use the district's technology resources or the network connected services effectively;
- Activities that result in the loss of another student/staff member's work or unauthorized access to another student/staff member's work;
- Distribution of any material in such a manner that might cause congestion of the voice, video, and data networks.

**III. RESPONSIBILITY OF USE (continued)**

Unacceptable use of information technology resources includes: (continued)

- Distribution or collection of obscene, abusive or threatening material via telephone, video, electronic mail, internet or other means;
- Use of technology resources for a commercial, political, or profit-making enterprise, except as specifically agreed to with the district;
- Use of technology system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law;
- Use of the school district system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation;
- Use of the school district system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons.

**IV. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

- A. By authorizing use of the school district information technology resources, the school district does not relinquish control over materials on the system, or materials contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.
- C. Parents have the right at any time to review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
- D. School district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minnesota Statute, Chapter 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- E. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning, or related to, any illegal activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.

**V. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY**

Use of the school district information technology resources is at the individual's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in, or interruptions of service or missed deliveries or non deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district resources or the internet.

**VI. NOTIFICATION**

All individuals shall be notified of the school district policies relating to information technology resources use.

This notification shall include the following:

- A. Notification that information technology use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
- B. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
  - 1. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
  - 2. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks or on-line resources.
  - 3. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks or on-line resources.
  - 4. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
- C. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
- D. Notification that, even though the school district may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.
- E. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the student or the student's parents.

**VI. NOTIFICATION (continued)**

- F. Notification that should the user violate the school district's policy for Information Technology Usage, the individual's access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
- G. Notification that all provisions of the usage policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

**VII. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possible offensive media.
- B. Parents or guardians will be notified that their student(s) will be using school district resources/accounts to access the internet, and must notify the district in writing if their son or daughter is not to have access to the internet or e-mail using school resources.

**VIII. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

- A. The proper use of the internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district.
- B. This policy requires the permission of, and supervision by, the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the internet.
- C. The Internet Use Agreement form - *Permission For Independent Use of the Internet*- must be read and signed by the user and the supervising teacher. The form must then be filed at the school office. As teachers change, the agreement signed by the new teacher shall be attached to the original agreement.
- D. Parents must notify the district, in writing, if their son or daughter is not to have internet or e-mail access. (See Exhibit A Permission for Independent Use of the Internet.)
- E. Students will be instructed in the appropriate use of the Internet, including the use of e-mail by classroom teachers and/or media specialists prior to independent use of the Internet.
- F. Independent use of the Internet refers to a student, or group of students, using a computer to access the Internet or send e-mail.

**CROSS REFERENCES:**

**LEGAL REGERENCES:**

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