

Technology and Instruction

Responsible Use Policy

Section 1. Statement of Purpose and Intent

- A. The Cheshire Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the educational value of electronic information resources. As discussed in this Policy, these resources include, but are not limited to, local area computer networks, wide area computer networks, hardware, the Internet, electronic mail, CD-ROMs, other software programs, and the data contained on such resources. The Board supports access by students to the School District’s (the “District’s) electronic information resources, and it is the policy of the Board that students and staff use these resources in ways that are educationally appropriate, legal, and respectful of the rights of others.
- B. The Board recognizes that, when using a resource such as the Internet, it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial or potentially inappropriate materials or to predict with complete certainty what information a user may locate. The possibility of accessing such material does not imply endorsement of its content by the Board nor does it imply consent to the accessing or use of such material by students.
- C. It is the responsibility of all students to learn and abide by this Responsible Use Policy and the Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement which implements the Policy. Compliance with the Responsible Use Policy and Access Agreement will assure that access to electronic information resources is undertaken for educational and research purposes only and is not abused by any user.

Section 2. Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement

- A. The Superintendent or his designee shall prepare for approval by the Board, two versions of an Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement: One version for grades kindergarten through grade two and one version for grades three through twelve.
- B. The Access Agreements shall implement the requirements of this Policy and shall state the specific behaviors which are required of all students using the District’s electronic information resources.

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- C. All parents (or legal guardians) and all students in grades three through twelve shall annually read and sign a grade-appropriate Access Agreement. Return of the signed Agreement is a precondition to the student's use of any of the District's electronic information resources. The current Access Agreements are found as attachments to this Policy.

Section 3. Training and Education

- A. Qualified staff shall conduct specific orientation lessons for all students at the beginning of each school year to provide instruction concerning the provisions and requirements of this Policy. In addition, during the school year, students will receive such instruction as a part of assignments which use electronic information resources.
- B. All students with access to the electronic information resources shall be trained in the proper use of these resources. They will be taught how to evaluate the resources and how to use them responsibly to meet electronic information educational and research goals.
- C. All student training and education shall be age-appropriate.
- D. Qualified staff shall conduct special information sessions for parents and legal guardians to provide annual information on this Responsible Use Policy.

Section 4. Notices Concerning the Responsible Use Policy and the Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement

- A. This Responsible Use Policy shall be published, in full, in the annual *Parents/Student Handbook of Selected Policies, Procedures, and Regulations*. The Superintendent or his designee shall provide copies of the Handbook to school offices, school libraries, and the Cheshire Public Library.
- B. The Electronic Information Resources Access Agreements shall be published in each school's *Student Handbook*.
- C. This Responsible Use Policy shall be prominently posted in all computer labs, school libraries, classrooms, and in any other rooms or offices equipped with District electronic information resources.

Section 5. Access to Electronic Information Resources

- A. Access to and use of the District's electronic information resources shall be for educational or research purposes only and only as those purposes are consistent with the educational objectives of the Board.
- B. Access to the District's electronic information resources is limited to those students who have demonstrated, in an age-appropriate way, that they understand the Responsible Use Policy.
- C. Access privileges shall be appropriate to each student's grade-level technology benchmarks.
- D. Internet filtering programs shall be used on all of the District's computers.
- E. Staff shall actively supervise students who are accessing or using the District's electronic information resources. "Active supervision" means that staff is present when students are using the resources; staff appropriately monitors and restricts student access; and staff actively promotes the Responsible Use Policy.

Section 6. Standards for Personal Responsibility

- A. All students shall act responsibly, ethically, and legally when using the District's electronic information resources.
- B. Students shall promptly report any violation of this Policy to an appropriate staff member.
- C. No student shall vandalize or intentionally harm or destroy (or assist others to vandalize or intentionally harm or destroy) any of the District's electronic information resources, any data of another user, or any other networks that are connected to the District's electronic information resources. This includes, but is not limited to, tampering with computer hardware and software; uploading or creating computer viruses; vandalizing data; modifying data without permission; and attempting to gain access to restricted or unauthorized networks, network services, or other unauthorized electronic information resources.

- D. No student shall misuse (or assist others in misusing) any of the District's electronic information resources. This includes, but is not limited to, sending or requesting messages or materials which attack ethnic, religious, or racial groups or which include or promote pornography, unethical or illegal activities, sexism, harassment, or any inappropriate language or content.

Section 7. Standards for Network Behavior

- A. Students shall use the District's electronic information resources only with the permission of a staff member.
- B. Students shall be polite and shall not use profanities, vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language when using the District's electronic information resources.
- C. Students shall not send, or encourage others to send, abusive, harassing, annoying, or inappropriate messages or materials. Students shall not send, or encourage others to send, any material that a reasonable person would deem to be obscene or in violation of community standards for obscenity.
- D. Students shall respect the privacy of others. No student shall reveal any personal, confidential, or sensitive information, including addresses or telephone numbers of any student.
- E. The publishing of student work and images requires written parental permission. This permission will allow school personnel to record audios, take photos, or videos of students. These images or recordings as well as student work may be published in various locations, including the school or the district website. The district permission slip will inform parents that the district has no control over any subsequent use or publication of the images, recordings, or student work so published.

Third parties, such as media or other parents, may take images of students in school or at school events, and in those instances the district has no control over the use of those images once they are published.

- F. Students shall keep log-in identifications and passwords confidential, shall not share log-in identifications or passwords with anyone, and shall not use another person's log-in identification or password at any time. Misuse of log-in/password protocols shall be reported to the staff in charge.

- G. Students shall comply with this Policy when sending and receiving electronic mail (e-mail). E-mail shall be used for educational and research purposes only. Misuse of e-mail shall be reported to the staff in charge.
- H. Students shall not use the District's electronic information resources to personally solicit for commercial, personal, religious, or political purposes nor to solicit for outside organizations.

Section 8. Compliance with Laws, Regulations, and Board Policies

- A. Students shall not transmit, receive, or duplicate any material in violation of any federal or state laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, laws governing the use of copyrighted or trade marked materials and laws prohibiting threatening, harassing, or obscene behavior. This also prohibits the improper use or copying of licensed software and the use of personal or borrowed software on the District's networks.
- B. Students shall comply with all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations and policies of the Board while accessing and using the District's electronic information resources.
- C. The district recognizes its responsibility to educate students regarding appropriate behavior on social networking and chat room sites about cyber-bullying. Therefore, students shall be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.

Section 9. Standards for District Access and Ownership

- A. The District's network; computer facilities; associated hardware; software; software peripherals; user files; electronic messages; and all data and programs stored, created, or generated using the District's electronic information resources are the sole and exclusive property of the District.
- B. The Board reserves the right to access, review, read, monitor, edit, delete, and print, any files, data, electronic mail, or other information or material which is created, communicated, accessed, or stored by any user on any of the District's electronic information resources.
- C. No student shall copy, reproduce, or remove any files, data, or equipment for any purpose without the prior approval of the Superintendent or his designee.

Section 10. Disclaimers/Standards for Network Service

- A. The Board makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the electronic information resources service it is providing to students.

- B. The Board shall not be liable for any damages suffered by any user while using the District's electronic information resources. These "damages" include, but are not limited to, loss of data as a result of delays, non-deliveries of data or messages, mis-deliveries, service interruptions, or other damages whether caused by the system or resulting from the user's or the Board's errors or omissions. Users agree to hold the Board and its employees and agents harmless from any loss or damage that may occur as a result of the use of the District's electronic information resources.
- C. The use of any information obtained through the District's network or other electronic information resources is at one's own risk. Although specific precautions shall be taken to provide a safe and effective learning environment, the Board specifically denies any responsibility for, the accuracy, quality, or content of information obtained through its electronic information resources.

Section 11. Consequences for Violation of the Responsible Use Policy

- A. The use of the District's electronic information resources is a privilege and not a right.
- B. Students who have been found to have violated this Policy are subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, temporary suspension or cancellation of access privileges, detention, suspension from school, and expulsion from school.
- C. Students who have been found to have violated this Policy are also subject to prosecution if the violation is determined to be a violation of local, state, or federal law.
- D. If the student's deliberate violation of this Policy results in damage to the District's electronic information resources or to the electronic information resources of others, the student and his or her parents (or legal guardians) shall be liable to compensate the District and others for such damage.