

Policy GBEE Internet and Electronic Communication

Adopted 11/11/21

NOTE: *This policy constitutes only a portion of the district Internet Acceptable Use/Safety Policy.*

The board supports the use of the Internet and electronic communications by staff members to improve teaching and learning through interpersonal communication, access to information, research, training and collaboration, and dissemination of successful educational practices, methods, and materials. Staff members will take responsibility for their own use of district technology devices and the district network to ensure compliance with board policy. "District technology device" means any district-owned computer, hardware, software, or other technology.

No Expectation of Privacy

District administration will continuously monitor all uses of district technology devices and the district network. The superintendent and/or his/her designee are authorized to access, inspect, monitor, and/or store any computer files, emails, internet usage logs, or any other electronic data at any time and for any purpose without staff consent or authorization. Staff members have no expectation of privacy in their use of district technology devices or the district network.

Staff members are expected to cooperate fully with any investigation concerning or relating to the use of district technology. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities conducted with district technology devices or through the district network.

Public Records

Electronic communications sent and received by district staff may be considered public records subject to public disclosure or inspection under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. Staff members should ensure that all electronic communications are professional in tone and content and are made for the express purpose of furthering the educational goals of the district.

Unauthorized and Unacceptable Uses

Because of the rapid evolution of technology, every possible use of district technology devices cannot be addressed in board policy. If a staff member has a question regarding the appropriateness of a given use of technology, he/she should consult his/her direct supervisor or building principal for guidance.

Generally, staff members are expected to protect the health, safety, and emotional well-being of students and to preserve the integrity of the learning environment. Staff members should preview and assess the appropriateness of any content accessed using district technology devices, accessed through the district network, and/or shared with students. Online or electronic conduct that distracts or disrupts the learning environment; adversely affects the reputation or image of the district, the staff, or the board; or other conduct in violation of this or related district policies may form the basis for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

No staff member will access, create, transmit, display, or forward any material that does the following:

- promotes violence or advocates destruction of property including, but not limited to, access to information concerning the manufacturing or purchasing of destructive devices or weapons
- contains pornographic, obscene, or other sexually oriented materials, either as pictures or writings

- harasses, threatens, demeans, or promotes violence or hatred against another person or group of persons with regard to race, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions), color, disability, age (40 or older), genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by local, state, or federal law
- uses inappropriate or profane language likely to be offensive to others in the school community
- violates third-party copyright or license agreements or otherwise constitutes unauthorized use of and/or copying of materials

Staff may not post chain letters or engage in “spamming” (i.e. sending unnecessary messages to a large number of people).

Staff may not use district technology devices for any commercial purposes including, but not limited to, providing goods or services or purchasing goods or services for personal use.

The superintendent and/or his/her designee may remove or otherwise restrict a staff member’s access to district technology devices or the district network if it is determined the individual engaged in unauthorized and/or inappropriate activity or violated the district’s acceptable use policies. Violations of district acceptable use policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Cf. IJNDB

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Legal References:

- A. United States Code of Laws, as amended:
 - 1. Children’s Internet Protection Act, 47 U.S.C.A. Section 254(h).
 - 2. Digital Millennium Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C.A. Section 512.
- B. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
 - 1. Section 10-1-205 - Computers in public libraries; regulation of Internet access.
 - 2. Section 16-15-305 - Disseminating, procuring, or promoting obscenity unlawful; definitions; penalties; obscene material designated contraband.
 - 3. Section 30-4-10, *et seq.* - Freedom of Information Act.

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