

**Washington County District School Board
Telecommunications Network/Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

The Washington County District School Board's telecommunications network provides expanded learning opportunities for students and staff. The goal of this network is to support and enhance learning and teaching that prepares students for success in a global society. By providing this network to our students and staff, the district is able to promote educational excellence in our schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Students and staff are provided access to the Internet through the District's telecommunications network. The Internet provides instant access to original source material, general information, data, images, and computer software. It enables the rural classroom to take advantage of classroom experts from all over the world. Such access encourages individual and group projects, collaboration, and idea sharing. As a hands-on classroom tool, it motivates students. Because class, race, ability, and disability are removed as communication factors or barriers, the Internet is a natural tool for addressing the needs of all students.

Students and staff of the Washington County District School Board must use these telecommunication resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with this Policy. The use of these resources is a privilege that can be revoked at any time for inappropriate use. Other legal or disciplinary action as appropriate to the violation may also be taken. All users must acknowledge their understanding of this policy and guidelines as a condition of receiving access. Each year, employees, students, and their parent or guardian must sign and submit the appropriate Acceptable Use Agreement form. By signing the appropriate agreement form, the students and employees agree to follow the rules set forth in this Policy and to report any misuse to a teacher or supervisor. The students' parent or guardian must sign the appropriate agreement form and return it to the school before access is granted to their child.

Users are to have no expectation of privacy while accessing the provided telecommunication services. As providers of the computer hardware, software, local and wide area networks, and access to the Internet, federal and state laws give the Washington County District School Board the right to monitor all communications on district computers and other remote access equipment. All restrictions included in this Policy apply whether access is on or off site.

The users of the Washington County District School Board telecommunications network must recognize that they are bound by state public record laws. Documents that are created to formalize knowledge or transact business of the Washington County District School Board are considered public record, open to the review and copying of the general public. This includes all work records on every computer system, data transmitted over the servers from on site or off-site locations, and portable media such as disks, CD's, and any other transportable media. All records must be retained according to Florida public records statute.

Internet Safety

During the 1995-96 school year, prior to the passage of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Washington County District School Board began the use of Internet-site blocking technology. Currently, the district complies with the CIPA requirements by the use of an in-district WatchGuard Firebox Schoolmate Security System that was originally installed in 1998-99.

Internet Safety (Continued)

The filter software is updated electronically on an on-going basis. Additionally, during the 1999-2000 school year, the District began participating in the Florida Information Resource Network (FIRN) Internet filter. FIRN currently uses the 8e6 R2000 filtering system. All Internet access is, therefore, double filtered. The current blocked categories are: Illegal Gambling, Satanic/Cult, Gross Depictions, Sexual Acts, Full Nudity, Militant/Extremists, Violence/Profanity, Adult-Oriented, Racist or Hate-Oriented, and Seditious Material. Individual web-site addresses that are reported to the district as inappropriate are also blocked.

Students use of the Washington County District School Board's telecommunications network must be monitored by their responsible instructor and students must report any access to inappropriate sites to them. Instructors are expected to report the site addresses to the district Data Center so that they can be blocked immediately. All users are also expected to report any security problems to the appropriate individuals. The security problems are not to be demonstrated to others.

Acceptable Uses

The telecommunications network is the property of the Washington County District School Board and is intended to be used for approved educational purposes only. Acceptable uses of the telecommunications network are activities which support learning and teaching. Users are expected to develop uses which meet their individual needs and which take advantage of the network's functions such as: 1) Electronic mail; 2) On-line training; 3) Bulletin boards; 4) Data base and other research institutions' information searches; 5) Discussion groups; 6) On-line subscription services; and 7) On-line library services.

Unacceptable Uses

All users must become familiar with the basics of what specific communication triggers sexual harassment, other harassment, copyright, trademark, and other relevant computer abuse laws. Lack of knowledge is not a defense to computer abuse or violation of laws. The user must recognize a higher duty of care in using electronic communications because text-based messages, pictures, audio, video, and documents can reach a large audience within seconds. All uses must serve a legitimate educational purpose as determined by the sole discretion of the Board.

Examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to:

1. Violating the conditions of the Education Code dealing with student's rights to privacy.
2. Transmitting personal information through text or pictorial attachments.
3. Posting, accessing, downloading, storing or printing materials that are considered pornographic, obscene, harmful, inappropriate for educational purposes, may be considered offensive to others, and/or that encourage others to violate the law.
4. Using someone else's account (user id) or password at any time or disclosing one's account (user id) or password to other users for their use.
5. Accessing another user's email and reading or forwarding the other user's emails or files. Forwarding email and attachments that include any confidential information or that can be considered defamatory or harassing. The sender is liable for both opening and forwarding email and shall not disguise his identity.
6. Wasting network resources by monopolizing or restricting the flow of data across the district's wide area network.
7. Downloading or installing any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto computer hard drives, network drives or disks without written permission from administrator.

Unacceptable Uses (Continued)

8. Hacking into the computer systems that belong to the Washington County District School Board.
9. Accessing "chat rooms" or utilizing "instant messaging."
10. Using the network for personal financial gain, any commercial or illegal activity, or advertising and/or soliciting.
11. Using the network for trademark infringement or violation of the Federal copyright laws.
12. Linking district or school web sites to other sites without obtaining proper authorization from the employee's supervisor or the student's responsible instructor. When one site is linked to another, it gives the appearance that the district sponsors that site's content. Additionally, no other web site can be framed within a district or school web site unless permission has been obtained.

Network Etiquette

All users must understand and practice proper ethical use of the Washington County District School Board's telecommunications network. All users are expected to abide by this Acceptable Use Policy as well as the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

The rules of network etiquette include, but are not limited to:

1. All messages to others will be courteous and non-abusive.
2. No swear words, vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language are to be used.
3. Messages should be well written. Words are to be chosen carefully to avoid misunderstanding. Users should always proofread and edit messages prior to sending them.
4. Descriptive subject headings, salutations, and sender's name should be included in all email messages.
5. Avoid using all capital letters (SHOUTING) and any other agitating messages.
6. Inappropriate use of the network services, such as online game playing or opening/downloading streaming audio or video, that interrupts the use of the network by others is forbidden.
7. Students are to be under the direct supervision of their responsible instructors during their use of the network.

Legal Proceedings

In the event of litigation, all Washington County District School Board staff and students are under federal and state civil rules of procedure that require disclosure and allow search of all computer hardware and software. This includes, but is not limited to, school or district computers, laptops, printers, cell phones, and other electronic equipment. Any attempt to damage or destroy evidence embedded in any of these will cause severe civil and criminal penalties (legally known as spoliation claims).

Amendments

This Policy may be amended or revised as the need arises based on Washington County District School Board policies and procedures. Users will be provided with copies of all amendments and revisions. This Policy will also be posted and maintained on the District's web site, located at <http://www.paec.org/wcsb>.

Disclaimer

The Washington County District School Board makes no guarantees about the quality of the telecommunication network/Internet services provided and is not responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the unauthorized use of the services. Individual users are responsible for any losses sustained by the District or its affiliates resulting from the user's intentional misuse of these services. The District assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through these services

Admittance of Prior Online Abuse

By signing the appropriate Acceptable Use Agreement form, all employee and student users validate that they have no present or past disciplinary record for telecommunications network/Internet abuse. Further, all users acknowledge that they have not been found guilty in a United States civil or criminal court for violating any state or federal computer laws.