

Department of Education

Hancock County

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INTERNET SAFETY AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP) of Electronic Media

- I. **ACCEPTABLE USE:** The purpose of Hancock County's Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy provision of access to the Internet is to support research and education in and among schools and academic institutions in the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the Hancock County School System. Transmission of any materials in violation of any U.S. or state organization is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or materials protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities by for-profit institutions is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited. The Hancock County School System will integrate Internet safety in the K-12 curriculum and instruction. Students will be given appropriate instruction in Internet safety as a part of any instruction utilizing computer resources. Students will be educated and monitored on appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response. Internet safety information will be provided for students, parents, grandparents, caregivers, and community stakeholders via the school system's website, <http://www.hancockcountyschools.com>, in order to raise awareness of the dangers posed by the Internet and ways in which the Internet may be used safely. Professional development opportunities for teachers and staff will be provided for the school district. The Hancock County Board of Education will review, evaluate, and revise this policy biennially.
- II. **PRIVILEGES:** The use of Hancock County School's network services is a PRIVILEGE, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges for faculty as well as students. The network administrator, Director of Schools, and school board will deem what is inappropriate use, take appropriate action and determine consequence. Also, the network administrator may close an account or deny access at any time as required. The Director of Schools and/or school board may request the network administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.
- III. **NETIQUETTE (NETWORK ETIQUETTE):** The use of an account/access requires that you abide by accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

BE POLITE. Do not send abusive messages to ANYONE.

USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE. In all messages, do not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Anything pertaining to illegal activities is strictly forbidden.

PRIVACY. Do not reveal the personal address or phone numbers of yourself or any other person. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed private property. Do not forward/distribute an email message without permission from the author. Conduct relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to appropriate authorities. Note that the school network and e-mail is not guaranteed to be private.

While electronic information resources, such as electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications offer tremendous opportunities of educational value, they also offer persons with illegal or unethical purposes avenues for reaching students, teachers, and others, including parents. The following represent some of the inappropriate uses that may occur:

- using copyrighted material in reports without permission
- using "Chat" (IRC) or instant messaging without prior approval in writing from the Principal, Director of Schools, or Technology Coordinator.
- using the network to access a file that contains pornographic pictures or other inappropriate material
- using the network to send/receive messages that are racist
- using the network to send/receive inflammatory messages
- creating a computer virus and placing it on the network
- using the network to send/receive a message with someone else's name on it
- using the network to send/receive/display a message or picture that is offensive
- using the network to access data that may be considered to be vulgar and/or obscene
- using the network to request home phone numbers and, later, making obscene phone calls to the numbers
- using the network to provide addresses or other personal information of minors that others may use inappropriately
- using the network for "hacking" or other unlawful activities
- using the network for "bullying" or harassment
- using the network for business transactions
- using the network for gambling
- using the network to harass, insult, defame or attack others
- damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- trespassing in another's folders, work or files
- intentional misuse of resources
- using another's password or other identifier (impersonation)
- using the network for commercial purposes
- buying or selling on the Internet
- using the network for unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors and others.

- IV. SERVICES: Hancock County Schools provide filtered Internet service to every school and location for instructional and administrative purposes which restricts minors from accessing inappropriate content on the Internet. Although filtered Internet is provided and is deemed sufficient to protect minors from obscenity, child and adult pornography, and other harmful content, it is possible for students to access inappropriate material. Therefore, students are responsible for appropriate conduct using the Internet/network. An authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for a bona fide research or other lawful purpose. Students are permitted access to the Internet with a signed Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy. Hancock County Schools will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer. Use of any information obtained via Hancock County School's network services is at your own risk. We deny any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through network services. Users with network access shall not utilize district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. All data including e-mail communications stored or transmitted on the school system computers and personal computers/devices which are allowed to be used at the school shall be monitored. Personal laptops and electronic devices and the content of the devices are subject to search by a teacher and administrator at any time without permission. Students/teachers should have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data. E-mail correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection. Students must understand that the use of personal computers/devices in the classroom is at the teacher's discretion and must support instructional activities. Personal computers/devices allowed to be used in the school will be treated as school property. Students must abide by the rules of this policy when allowed to use personal computers/devices on the school network. Failure to abide by these rules and regulations when using personal computers/devices will result in the equipment being confiscated.
- V. VANDALISM: Vandalism may result in cancellation of privileges and/or criminal prosecution. This includes, but is not limited to, contamination, deletion or reconfiguration of data or degradation of system performance in any way.
- VI. SANCTIONS OR CONSEQUENCES:
- **1st Offense** - Banned from Internet for a period of six months. After the first offense, parents/guardian must meet with the Principal, Director of Schools, and Technology Coordinator prior to students receiving Internet access.
 - **2nd Offense** - Banned from Internet access for a period of one calendar year. After the 2nd offense, parents/guardian must meet with the Principal, Director of Schools, and Technology Coordinator prior to students receiving Internet access again.
 - **3rd Offense** - Banned from Internet access forever (through Hancock County Schools).

Teachers of the Hancock County School System shall promote this agreement with the student. Teachers will instruct the student on acceptable use and safety of the Internet/network and proper network etiquette. Teachers will report any misuse of the information system to the Hancock County School's network administrator. Misuse can come in many forms, but can be viewed as any

messages/pictures sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language, and other issues described above.

Parental consent shall be required prior to the student being granted access to electronic media involving district technological resources. This policy must be signed by the parent/legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This signed policy shall be valid unless the parent/legal guardian provides a written notice that consent is withdrawn. In order to rescind the agreement, the student's parent/legal guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Director of Schools with a written request. Violations of this policy or a procedure promulgated under its authority shall be handled in accordance with the existing disciplinary procedures of the school district.

"I understand and will abide by the above terms and conditions set forth in this policy. I further understand that any violation of the regulation above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action pursued."

(If user is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must also read and sign this policy agreement.) As the student, I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions for use set forth above pertaining to accessing the Internet/network and using the Internet work services. I understand that these privileges are designed for educational purposes. I will not hold Hancock County Schools responsible for material acquired or problems related to the use of the material acquired on the Internet/network. I will utilize the Internet/network appropriately and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Student Name (please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: ___/___/___

Parent or Guardian Network Responsibility Contract: (If user is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must also read and sign this policy agreement.) As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read and agree to the terms and conditions for use set forth above pertaining to accessing the Internet/network and using the Internet work services. I understand that these privileges are designed for educational purposes. I will not hold Hancock County Schools responsible for material acquired or problems related to the use of the material acquired on the Internet/network. I hereby give my permission for my child to utilize the Internet/network and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: ___/___/___