

Grant Parish School Board 2014-2015 School Year

INTERNET SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Scope of This Policy

This policy is in addition to any other Grant Parish School Board policies currently in place. It does not take the place of or wholly supersede any previous policy. Portions of this policy that conflicts with previous policies supersede only the conflicting portion of the previous policy.

Internet Protection Measure

A technology protection measure is a hardware and/or software technology that restricts or filters access to specific areas or sites on the Internet. It provides a measure of protection against access by minors or adults to Internet resources that are obscene, contain child pornography, contain material harmful to minors (with respect to Internet access by minors), or are otherwise inappropriate in an educational environment. Grant Parish School District has had an Internet protection measure in place since 1999. The District uses a product which utilizes blocking technology whereby specific Internet sites are included in a list of blocked sites and access to these sites is restricted. At the minimum, the blocked site list is updated weekly. All Internet access in the District is filtered. While the filter is very effective in blocking inappropriate content, the Internet is a rapidly expanding resource and no filtering or blocking technology is 100% effective. The possibility exists that all inappropriate content may not be blocked or that a determined person may find a method to partially or completely circumvent the filtering or blocking method.

As a matter of policy, all Internet access from within Grant Parish School District will be filtered. There is no exception to this policy. In the case of Internet access by minors, the filtering mechanism may not be disabled for any reason. For access by staff members the filtering mechanism may be disabled only to enable bona fide research.

If a person feels an Internet site has been blocked in error, a written request must be submitted to their Highly Skilled Educator or Supervisor. This request will then be submitted to the Technology Department who will review the site in question. If it is deemed that the site is wrongly blocked, the site will be opened. If there is any question about the appropriateness of the site, the Technology Department will make a recommendation to the Superintendent for a final decision.

Access by Minors to Inappropriate Material in the Internet and World Wide Web

The Internet is a vast and invaluable educational resource. However, in a worldwide network, there exists a small amount of information that is not appropriate for minors or an educational setting. Active measures such as filtering Internet access have been taken to minimize the chance of access by minors to these inappropriate materials. Additionally, as in other school matters, student use of the Internet will be supervised by school staff to reduce the chance a student will access inappropriate material. In order to educate students on appropriate use of the District system and the Internet, personnel who are responsible for supervising student access to the District's system will provide information to students emphasizing ethical and appropriate use of these resources.

Safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat or other direct communications

Due to the problems involved with providing adequate supervision of electronic communications, student email accounts will not be issued by Grant Parish School Board. Additionally, two-way, real-time electronic communication technologies such as Internet-based instant messaging and Internet chat will not be allowed within the District. Furthermore, the participation by students in asynchronous social networking, electronic forums or bulletin boards that are not exclusively of educational nature is prohibited. The exception to this is pre-approved, temporary access to such technologies for a specific educational need. Such usage must have prior written approval from the Technology Department and will be granted on a temporary basis. Written request for access to these technologies from the

school principal or central office department head must be submitted to the Technology Department for written approval. If there is a question about the appropriateness of the access, the Technology Department will make a recommendation to the Superintendent for a final decision.

Hacking, Vandalism, and Unauthorized Access

Malicious attempt to harm, deface, degrade, or destroy District equipment, software, or data or the data of another user or system to which the District network is connected is strictly prohibited. Such action includes but is not limited to using proxies to bypass or circumvent the internet filter, intentionally uploading or creating computer viruses, "hacking" of websites, or intentionally degrading or disrupting system performance. No one shall bring any type of equipment not purchased by GPSB and connect to the GPSB network without prior written consent of their principal, supervisor and GPSB Technology representative.

Additionally, attempting to log on to the system by using another person's password or attempting to access District resources, or those resources connected to the District network, for which the user does not have permissions or rights is prohibited. These actions will be viewed as violations of District guidelines and policy and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

Unauthorized disclosure of personal information

Unauthorized disclosure, use, and/or dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors are prohibited. Requests for account usernames and password will never be requested via email and any such requests should be regarded as unauthorized and should be immediately reported to the school principal or department head. Requests for personal information regarding students or staff should not be honored via email. Such requests should always occur by means of personal contact. All Board policies, state, and federal laws should be followed when a request for personal information of any sort is made.

Measures Restricting Access by Minors to Inappropriate Materials

The safety and protection of students while using the Internet or District network resources is of primary importance. Therefore, active measures will be taken to restrict, to the maximum extent reasonably possible, students' access to inappropriate material on the Internet and District network. The first of these measures is the filtering of all Internet access in the District as described above. As noted before, no filtering system is perfect and cannot substitute for staff supervision of student Internet use. Therefore, students are allowed to use computers attached to the District network only when supervised or granted permission by a staff member responsible for their supervision. To assist in the supervision process, computers that are attached to the network will, to the extent allowed by the individual room, be placed to maximize staff supervision of students using the system. As noted above, forms of electronic direct, real-time communication such as instant messaging and Internet chat are very difficult to supervise and the instant nature of the communication increases the danger that inappropriate messages will be sent or received. Because of the difficulty in supervising this type of communication, it is prohibited as outlined above.

Email and General Technology Guidelines

- Email, web access, and other electronic communications should not be considered private. While it is a violation of policy for a user or student to attempt to gain access to information for which they do not have authorization, authorized staff may monitor or examine email, file folders, and communications to maintain system integrity, to insure users are using the system responsibly, or for any other reasonable purpose.
- The hardware, software, and networks that the Grant Parish School District email system operate on have been purchased with public funds. For this reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. Although authorized staff does not actively monitor email or other electronic communications, contents of any communication of this type would be governed by any applicable public records law.

- District computers, software, networks, and Internet access are provided to support the administrative and instructional functions of Grant Parish School District. These resources are to be used primarily for school and district-related purposes. Incidental personal use of district technology resources or equipment must not interfere with the employee's job performance or student learning. Additionally, such use must not violate this or any other Board policy, must not damage the district's hardware, software, or networks, or significantly degrade the quality of service of the District's technology resources.
- Personal information on any staff member or student shall not be released by email.
- All users must follow existing copyright laws and restrictions regarding computer software and must not use District computer systems to violate any software license agreement, or any applicable federal, state, or local laws.
- All web pages or electronic publications created by any organization, staff, student, or other person that are housed on the District's computer systems will be subject to treatment as district-sponsored publications. Therefore, the district reserves the right to exercise editorial control over the content of these web pages or publications. Only content that supports the administrative, instructional, or other legitimate mission of the school or department will be allowed on District web sites. Content of all District web sites must conform to the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Additionally, no web page that represents any school, department, organization, or person of the Grant Parish School Board may be published on a web server that is outside of the District network without written permission of the Technology Department.
- District web pages or publications are not considered to be open, public forums. No such public forum may be created on any district web site to receive input from the public on any issue, educational or otherwise. District web sites shall be considered closed forums and shall be used only to transmit information to the public.
- District sponsored web sites may contain links to web sites that are outside of the District site. While district personnel will make every reasonable effort to research links for appropriateness, these third party sites are not under the control of the District and Grant Parish School District is not responsible for the contents of any linked site, any link contained within the linked site, or any changes or update to the linked site that may change its appropriateness. These links are provided as a convenience to users and their inclusion does not imply endorsement of these sites by Grant Parish School Board.
- Students bringing, obscene, vulgar, pornographic, racist, gang-related, hate, or other inappropriate material into the District's electronic environment are subject to applicable District policies and federal, state, or local laws. Appropriate disciplinary action or criminal charges may be applied to such actions. Staff members who knowingly bring obscene, vulgar, pornographic, racist, gang-related, hate or other inappropriate material into the District's electronic environment will be subject to disciplinary action or charges in accordance with District policies or federal, state, and local laws.
- Games and other software that is not of specific educational or administrative nature should not be placed on any District computer. All software that is installed on District computers must be for a specific educational or administrative purpose and must be properly licensed. Acceptable educational games must be primarily marketed for instructional purposes. Games that are not particularly designed for or marketed specifically to the education market are not allowed on District computers. Educational software must address a benchmark, standard, or lesson plan. Excluded from this are programs that are packaged with computer operating systems, utility programs such as anti-virus software, or utility software that enhances access to a computer's resources such as multimedia utility software. If there is a question about the appropriateness of particular software title, a request in writing should be made to the Technology Department.

Violation of Policy

In the case of students, the violation of any policy may result in the cancellation of user privileges and/or disciplinary action including expulsion or suspension. In the case of staff, the violation of any policy may result in the cancellation of user privileges and/or disciplinary action. Such acts may also result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal laws. In the case where such actions result in the district incurring costs to restore the network system, hardware, software, or data, the Board will require restitution for restoration costs.