

Type: Policy

Descriptor Code: IFBG

Title: Internet Usage and Social Media

Technology/Telecommunication Fair Use Contract/Acceptable Use

Internet access is available to qualifying students and staff. The Meriwether County School System strongly believes in the educational value of our technology resources and recognizes their potential to support our curriculum and student learning by facilitating resources, sharing, innovation, and communication. Users have the responsibility to treat the equipment with respect and to practice internationally accepted telecommunication etiquette and safety precautions.

The Meriwether County School System will make every effort to protect students from objectionable materials through supervision and internet e-mail filtering. However, the internet is constantly changing and students can be extremely inventive. It must be understood by staff, students, and parents that the possibility of exposure to inappropriate material exists but we believe the benefits of the internet resources far outweigh the risks. Parents should discuss the items below with their children/students.

A. Terms and Conditions

- a. Personal Responsibility - As a representative of this school, I will accept personal responsibility of inappropriate use of all resources, assist in keeping equipment free of damaging dust, take reasonable precautions against stolen, lost, damage and/or negligence, and I will report any misuse of technology hardware, software, network and Internet resources to a school administrator. I understand I am responsible for the replacement cost of stolen, lost, or damaged equipment as a result of negligence.
- b. ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AND OTHER INFORMATION SERVICES. Use of resources must be in support of the educational goals and objectives of the Meriwether County School System. Misuse may come in many forms and is commonly viewed as any message(s) sent or received that indicate or suggest:
 - i. Inappropriate language, racism, sexism, pornography
 - ii. Unethical or illegal activities of any kind
 - iii. Commercial, purchasing, or for-profit activities.
 - iv. Transmission of copyrighted, trade secret, threatening, and/or obscene material, etc.
 - v. I understand that I am not permitted (unless informed otherwise) to install any software and the only software permitted on the device or equipment is that which is pre-loaded by the MCSS Technology Department and software/applications which has been permitted to be added by staff. If I have a need for additional software/applications, I will contact the MCSS Technology Department.

- B. INTERNET GUIDELINES.** Remember that you are a representative of your school, state, and country on a worldwide network! You may be alone at the computer or technology device, but anything you input can be read from millions of technology devices anywhere on the planet. You are expected to abide by generally accepted guidelines which include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. Be a receiver of information long before you become a sender of information. Out of the millions of people using the internet, a few just might know more

- about a subject than you do. The freedom of exchange of opinions is a primary objective of the internet, but read the opinions of others before you give your own.
- b. Do not type messages in all capital letters. This is considered Shouting in telecommunication. Remember that humor and satire are often misinterpreted through the visual and auditory clues of face to face communication. Use emotions to convey your meaning.
 - c. Use your best grammar and spelling in messages so that your ideas are evaluated on their content rather than on their manner of presentation but be forgiving of the errors of others.
 - d. When you find a particularly interesting site on the internet, tell your media specialist and/or teacher. I have read and understand this provision.
- C. PRIVACY. **NEVER** give your name, home address, phone number or any other personal information on the Internet or any other information service! **Never** give out this type of information for any other person. **NEVER** use or share anyone else's name, password, or account.
- D. SECURITY. On all networks, security is of the highest priority. If you identify a security problem, notify a school administrator immediately. Never demonstrate a security flaw to other users. I have read and understand this provision.
- E. VANDALISM. Causing damage to any equipment or the data of another person or agency, including uploading or creating a computer virus, will result in the loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal referral. I have read and understand this provision.
- F. DISCLAIMER. The Meriwether County School System makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The Meriwether County School System will not be responsible for any damages suffered while using this system. These damages include loss of data, mis-deliveries, service interruptions, and /or exposure to offensive material. The Meriwether County School System specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy of information obtained through these services. I have read and understand this provision.
- G. REVOCATION OF TECHNOLOGY PRIVILEGES. For the first offense, revocation of technology privileges lasts for the remainder of the current school year. At the beginning of the next school year a new Technology/Telecommunication Fair Use Contract/Acceptable Use Policy must be signed by student and parent/guardian. After the second offense the revocation of privileges lasts for the remainder of the time that the student is at that school level-elementary, middle grades, high school. I have read and understand this provision.

Social Media Statement

The District recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and e-learning tool. The District may use these tools and other communication technologies in fulfilling its responsibility for education and effectively communicating with the general public.

This policy applies to all social media activities by district employees, including but not limited to the use of blogs, forums, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, Tumblr and YouTube) and any other web-based communications on publicly available sites. Social Media activities are encouraged to take place in a classroom or school office setting so long as such activities do not detract from the employees' effectiveness or other job duties. Faculty and staff should be mindful of content posted during contracted hours of the school day.

When participating in social media activities, even off duty and off premises, such activities must not violate any Board policies or otherwise interfere with the employees or co-

workers job performance. In other words, all policies that govern employee behavior, ethics, performance and professionalism apply to social media, just as it would anywhere else. The Board expects all employees to exercise professionalism and good judgment in any social media activities, as outlined in the Social Media Guidelines for District Employees.

Furthermore, any social media activities must comply with all applicable laws including, but not limited to, anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, copyright, trademark, defamation, privacy, securities, and any other applicable laws and regulations.

Any violation of this policy or the Social Media Guidelines for District Employees, or of any Board policies or procedures as a result of social media activities, may result in corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The superintendent is responsible for adopting social media guidelines and periodically updating them as needed to conform to technological advances and changing cultural norms.

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