

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AND COMPUTER RESOURCES

It is the belief of Macon County Schools that access to the Internet and other computer resources should be available to all students, faculty, and staff. The Internet, a network of networks, and other computer and information resources offer vast, diverse, and unique resources that can educate and inform. These resources have an important place as educational resources in our schools by facilitating information-sharing, innovation, and communication.

The Internet connects computers all over the world and millions of individuals. The Internet offers access to:

1. communication through electronic mail (e-mail);
2. information and news from various research institutions and organizations, as well as the opportunity to correspond with personnel at these sites;
3. discussion groups on an endless variety of topics;
4. many library catalogs, including universities and the Library of Congress;
5. opportunities for sharing of information and projects with peers in similar schools and situations; and
6. public domain software and shareware of all types.

The Internet is in a constant state of change, and it is difficult to predict what will be available from day to day. With access to the Internet, the possibility increases that material may be accessible that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Just as the purchase, availability and use of media materials does not indicate an endorsement of their contents by school officials, neither does making electronic information available to students imply endorsement of that content. Macon County Schools has taken strong precautions to restrict access to controversial materials; however, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials and information. It is the belief of Macon County Schools that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet are worthwhile, even though the possibility exists for access to materials, which are not educationally appropriate.

Students, parents, and all school personnel must work together to ensure the efficient and appropriate use of the Internet and other computer network services. The effective and productive use of the network depends upon end users who practice etiquette, exhibit proper ethical and legal conduct and adhere to strict guidelines. If a computer user violates any of these guidelines, consequences may be imposed. These consequences

include, but are not limited to, restriction or loss of network privileges. Each member of the school community shall be provided a copy of this policy. Use of the network and computer resources shall indicate a commitment by each individual to the terms set forth. If a parent/guardian of a student or an employee does not wish to have access to the Internet, the individual shall send a letter to this effect to either the school principal on behalf of the student or, if an employee, to the Superintendent or his designee.

Macon County Schools Internet And Computer Network Policies

Information Security Awareness

Information Security Awareness is to ensure that employees and contractors are familiar with information technology security policies, standards and procedures. School administrators shall lead by example by establishing a climate that gives information security a high priority in all current and future activities and initiatives.

Macon County Schools shall provide regular and relevant information security awareness communications to all staff in multiple formats. All employees and contractors shall be provided with security awareness information to enhance awareness and to educate them regarding the range of information technology security threats and appropriate safeguards.

Acceptable Use

Acceptable use of the Internet and computer network involves engaging in activities which support education and research and are consistent with the educational purposes and objectives of Macon County Schools. All use of any other organization’s network or computing resources accessed through the Internet must comply with the rules established for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening, profane, or obscene material, and material protected by trade secret. All Macon County Public School copyright guidelines are to be adhered to in regards to acceptable use of internet and computer network. Any use of the network for commercial or for-profit purposes, for product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Personal use that generates an additional cost, or inhibits the function of the network, is prohibited. All private business is prohibited.

Privileges:

The use of the Internet and other computer networks and resources is a privilege, not a right, offered to persons associated with Macon County Schools. Employee e-mail addresses shall be considered public information and, upon request, shall be made available to parents and members of the public for legitimate educational purposes. Misuse and/or violation of established policies may

result in consequences, including, but not limited to, suspension, restriction, or cancellation of user privileges. The administration, faculty, and staff of Macon County Schools may request the superintendent, or designee, to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts, and the superintendent, or designee, may close an account at any time, as warranted. Any decision to restrict, or revoke, access to the Internet may be appealed to the superintendent, or designee. Macon County Schools has a process in place for determining the appropriateness of information/materials.

Monitoring

Files stored on the Macon County Schools network, servers, electronic mail, and other uses of the school system's network are not private and may be subject to inspection and/or monitoring. Users of the internet/intranet are hereby informed that there can be no expectation of privacy, as designated district staff reserves authority to monitor and examine all system activities to insure their proper use. Messages related to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the authorities and may result in consequences including, but not limited to, suspension, the loss of use privileges, termination of employment, or suspension/expulsion from school.

Virus Protection

The purpose of virus protection is to protect district computers, data, and networks against viruses and other destructive programs.

Files downloaded to district computers might potentially harbor computer viruses, Trojan horses, logic or time bombs, worms or other destructive programs (collectively, "virus" or "viruses"); therefore, all downloaded files must be scanned for such viruses. Virus detection programs and practices shall be implemented throughout the district. Guidelines exist to ensure that all computer users know and understand safe computing practices. The Technology Department will ensure that district computers and networks have current software on their network to prevent the introduction or propagation of computer viruses and that district users perform frequent backups on sensitive data files.

Remote Access

Macon County Schools' computer systems, networks and data repositories are critical resources and must be protected against unauthorized access, malicious access, and disruption of service. Authorized users may be permitted to connect remotely to systems, networks and data repositories for the conduct of business only through secure, authenticated and carefully managed access methods.

Authorized users of such systems must take every precaution to prevent compromising confidential data. Such precautions include, but may not be limited to, proper user identifications and passwords,

as well as securing the actual device used for access. Hardware used to access these systems must have the latest security software and patches, including anti-virus, anti-spyware (anti-malware), with up-to-date definition files.

Network Etiquette

All network users are expected to follow the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
- b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are prohibited.
- c. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited.
- d. Do not reveal your personal information, addresses, or phone numbers, or those of other students or colleagues.
- e. Remember that your electronic mail may not be private. The system administrator of Macon County Schools, or designee, operates the system and has access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to authorities and may result in the loss of user privileges and /or termination of employment.
- f. Do not use the network in a way that may disrupt the use of the network for others or that results in excessive use of bandwidth. Do not subscribe to listservs or other subscription services without the prior approval of the IT department.
- g. Network users are not intentionally to seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users on the network.
- h. Users should practice discretion regarding the handling of information and communications accessible through the network.

- i. Do not download software of any kind (shareware, freeware, demo, games, ActiveX controls, etc.) without the prior approval of the IT department.
- j. Do not use the network for games, peer-to-peer sharing, internet telephony, streaming media, downloading internet video or audio, or for other entertainment purposes.

Warranties/Issues of Liability

Macon County Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it provides, nor will the District be responsible for any damages a user suffers. This includes damage or loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by Macon County Schools' negligence or by the user's negligence, errors/omissions; or by technical or other difficulties. Use of any information obtained through the Internet is at the user's own risk. Macon County Schools specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. All users need to consider the source of any information they retrieve and consider how valid that information may be.

Security

Security on any computer system or network is a high priority. Toward that end, Macon County Schools uses a filtering software that denies access to material that is obscene, that is child pornography or any other types of pornography, and that is harmful to minors. Perimeter security protects a network by controlling access to all entry and exit points. Access to data on Macon County Schools networks must be protected by adequate perimeter security measures. These network perimeter security measures must ensure that only authorized users, as determined by Macon County Schools, and information packets come in contact with Macon County Schools network resources and data. The IT Department is responsible for establishing appropriate security infrastructure and implementing security measures such as programming network devices and establishing necessary access controls.

Users should not use another individual's user identification, account number, or password, without written permission from the individual. Each user must protect his/her password and account number to ensure system security and to maintain use privileges. Attempts to log on to the Internet as the system administrator, or designee, may result in consequences, which include, but may not be limited to, revocation of privileges, suspension/expulsion employment termination, and notification of authorities. Any user identified as a security risk, or possessing a history of problems with other computer systems, may be denied access to the Internet. Network users have a duty to report to the building principal, the system administrator, or designee, knowledge of any security problems, or security breach, on the Internet and other computer networks. Do not demonstrate

the problem to other users. Macon County Schools reserves the right to temporarily or permanently remove a user account on the network for any reason, or no reason at all.

Vandalism and Harassment

Vandalism and harassment will result in cancellation of privileges.

- a. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt, degrade or destroy equipment, software or system performance. This includes system files or data of another user, the system or school computer systems, Internet, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others. Hardware or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
- b. Harassment is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user or the interference of another user's work. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, sending unwanted mail. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, or language that offends or degrades others is not permitted and must be reported to the building principal, system administrator, or designee.
- c. Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, uploading or creating computer viruses.

Controversial Material

Users may encounter material which others may consider inappropriate or offensive. On a global network, it is impossible to control completely the content of data, and an industrious user may discover controversial material. It is the user's responsibility not to initiate access to such material or to download, upload, store, or print files or messages that are profane, obscene, or that use language that offends or degrades others. Use of the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network is prohibited. Any decision by Macon County Schools to restrict access to Internet material shall not be deemed to impose any duty on the District to regulate the content of material on the Internet.

Computer Software

To ensure compliance with copyright laws, to ensure legal license requirements are met according

to the software manufacturer, to ensure network compatibility, and to ensure that the installed software poses no threat to network security, installation and removal of software at the school level should be carried out using following guidelines.

Guidelines to follow include:

- Personally licensed software is not permitted for installation;
- Do not download software of any kind from the internet (shareware, freeware, demo, games, ActiveX controls, etc.) without the prior approval of the IT department.
- No software shall be installed on any Macon Counter Schools computer unless the software is licensed to Macon County Schools
- No software shall be installed on any Macon County Schools computer unless it is on the Macon County Schools approved software list.
- All software shall be installed by the IT department unless express permission from the IT department is given.

Public Records

Users are advised that all *material* in whatever form in the school system's network may be considered a public record within the meeting of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, commonly known as the Public Records Act. Under the Public Records Act all material is considered the property of the people of the State of North Carolina which may be inspected, copied, used, republished, and otherwise made public.

Users are further advised that public records may not be destroyed, altered, defaced, or mutilated, and that doing so may result in conviction of a criminal misdemeanor.

Users are also advised that denying any person access to public records can result in a civil lawsuit requiring disclosure and the payment of fees and costs.