

Acceptable Use Policy

Winchester Public Schools

Internet

The Internet is a global infrastructure of networks that links colleges, universities, schools, museums, libraries, businesses, organizations and private individuals. The Internet is a powerful educational tool that can be used to search libraries for information, to visit virtual museums, to communicate with people, to read multimedia publications, to watch videos, to listen to music, and to access the resources of powerful computers throughout the world.

Purpose

The Winchester Public School System intends to make utilization of Internet capabilities an integral part of curriculum and instruction, whenever appropriate. Consequently, the school system will provide Internet access to all staff and students for the sole purpose of supporting educational excellence and enhancing teaching and learning. Internet use must be consistent with the educational goals of the Winchester Public Schools and may include activities such as finding relevant information and resources, facilitating educational collaboration, and promoting constructive dialogue. Use of Internet is a privilege that comes with individual responsibilities. Users are expected to adhere to all Winchester guidelines and procedures including those contained in student handbooks. Toward this end, all users will be required to acknowledge in writing, receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the Internet. Failure to fully comply with all procedures and guidelines will result in suspension of Internet privileges, disciplinary action consistent with the policies and procedures of Winchester Public Schools, and possible criminal prosecution.

District Responsibilities

The Winchester Public School system is responsible for developing this acceptable use policy for Internet access and for insuring that parents are fully informed of its content. Moreover, the system will inform parents that Internet does contain material that is inappropriate for children and school purposes. Students will receive instruction on appropriate use of Internet within their classrooms. The Winchester Public School system is also responsible for discussing potential misuses of the Internet with students including issues of privacy, copyright infringement, e-mail etiquette, and computer viruses. Internet training will be available to all staff members. The Winchester Public Schools will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation relates to any illegal activities conducted through use of Internet.

Winchester Services

Winchester students and staff will have access to the following Internet services in classrooms, computer laboratories, and libraries.

1. E-mail allows communication with people around the world. Students and staff will be able to subscribe to mail lists to engage in group discussions related to educational subjects.
2. World Wide Web is a valuable research tool that provides access to a wide range of information in the form of text, graphics, photographs, video, and sound, from throughout the world.
3. Telnet allows users to log in to remote computers for educational purposes.
4. File Transfer protocol (FTP) allows users to download large files and computer software.
5. Newsgroups are discussion groups that are similar to mail lists. The system will provide access to newsgroups appropriate to the educational purposes of the system.
6. Internet Relay Chat (IRC) provides the capability of engaging in "real-time" discussions. The system will provide access to IRC only for specifically designed educational activities.

Student Privileges

Students may use the Internet to locate material to meet their educational needs, participate in distance learning activities, to ask questions of and consult with experts, and to communicate with other students and individuals. Although, students at the middle school and high school will be allowed to work independently with Internet on educational assignments, all student use in the elementary schools will be under direct teacher supervision.

Student Responsibilities

One of the most important student responsibilities is the responsibility of using the vast reservoir of information available through Internet in an appropriate manner, consistent with system wide educational objectives. Students are once again advised that e-mail and/or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential. From time to time, communications will be monitored by the administration to assure that Internet use is in support of school system educational goals.

Staff Privileges

The staff shall have personal use of computer technology before and after the student day as well as any other time when a computer station is not needed by another staff member for his/her professional responsibilities.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff members will work with the administration and the authorities where there is evidence of student misuse of computer technology. A teacher monitoring students using technology in his/her area shall not be held responsible for a student's violations of the WPS Acceptable Use Policy. If a teacher becomes aware of inappropriate behavior, s/he shall report it to the administration.

Liability

The Winchester Public Schools disclaims all liability for the content of materials that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of a student's use of Internet, and for any other consequences of a student's use of Internet.

Eligibility and Access

The Winchester Public Schools shall provide access for students and employees to the system/network, including access to external networks, for educational purposes. The district will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and procedures.

1. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
2. Account names will be recorded on access agreements and kept on file at the building level. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and shall not be shared or displayed.
3. **The WSC shall take reasonable steps to ensure that computer technology shall be available in all buildings.**

Administration

1. The district will provide training to all users in the proper use of electronic resources including the system network and the Internet.
2. Principals or their designee will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
3. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by the policies and procedures regarding use of the system/network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
4. The Technology Director/designee may distribute copyrighted software in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy, and administrative procedures. System Administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system network. System Administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.

Users Responsibilities

Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their names. System users shall not use another person's account.

1. The safety of student users is of primary importance. Student users shall not supply personal information (addresses, phone numbers, pictures etc.) about themselves or other students to someone met online.
2. Student users should not arrange any personal meetings with someone met online. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any online communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.

Prohibited Uses

The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy. A user who violates state or federal laws, district policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of system/network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

1. Any malicious attempts to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
2. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
3. Attempts to read, delete, copy or modify the files or electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
4. Forgery is prohibited.
5. Use of inappropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs is prohibited.
6. Posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming" (Spamming" means sending annoying or unnecessary messages to large numbers of people) is prohibited.
7. Transmitting or viewing obscene material is prohibited.
8. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.