

INTERNET SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY

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 School District uses various products which utilize blocking, scanning technology whereby specific Internet sites are included in a list of blocked sites and access to these sites is blocked. At the minimum, the blocked site list is updated daily. All Internet access in the School District is filtered by multiple applications/software. 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 for students. In the case of Internet access by minors, the filtering mechanism may not be disabled for any reason. Certain employees, based upon their job, may be unfiltered with approval by and request of the Superintendent.

If a person feels an Internet site has been blocked in error, a written request from the school or central office department head must 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 School District system and the Internet, personnel who are responsible for supervising student access to the School 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 for grades PK-8th. Accounts may be issued for high school students in assist with college applications, etc. Additionally, two-way, real-time electronic communication technologies such as Internet-based instant messaging and Internet chat between students will not be allowed within the School District. Furthermore, the participation by students in asynchronous 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 requests 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 attempts to harm, deface, degrade, or destroy School District equipment, software, or data or the data of another user or system to which the School District network is connected is strictly prohibited. Such action includes but is not limited to intentionally uploading or creating computer viruses, "hacking" of websites, or intentionally degrading or disrupting system performance. Additionally, attempting to log on to the system by using another person's password or attempting to access School District resources, or those resources connected to the School District network, for which the user does not have permissions or rights is prohibited. These actions will be viewed as violations of School District guidelines and policy and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws.

UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors are prohibited. Requests for account usernames and passwords 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 School 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 School 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 School District network. The first of these measures is the filtering of all Internet access in the School District as described above. As noted before, no filtering system is perfect and cannot substitute for staff supervision of student Internet use. 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 ensure users are using the system responsibly, or for any other reasonable purpose.
- The hardware, software, and networks that the Grant Parish School Board operates on have been purchased with public funds. For this reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. Authorized staff may actively monitor email or other electronic communications, web site usage, searches. The contents of any communication of this type would be governed by any applicable public records law.
- School District computers, software, networks, and Internet access are provided to support the administrative and instructional functions of Grant Parish School Board. These resources are to be used primarily for education/ curriculum 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 School Board policy, must not damage the school district's hardware, software, or networks, or significantly degrade the quality of service of the School 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 School 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 or created on the School District's computer systems will be subject to treatment as district-sponsored publications. Therefore, the school 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 School District websites. Additionally, no web page/ social media platform that represents any school, department, organization, or person of the Grant Parish School Board will be linked to the official GPSB website without permission of the Technology Department.
- School 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. School District websites/social media platforms shall be considered closed forums and shall be used only to transmit information to the public.
- School District sponsored web sites may contain links to web sites that are outside of the School 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 School 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 School District's electronic environment are subject to applicable School 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 School District's electronic environment will be subject to disciplinary action or charges in accordance with School District policies or federal, state, and local laws.

- Games and other software that is not of specific educational or administrative nature shall not be placed on any School District computer. All software that is installed on School District computers must be for a specific educational or administrative purpose. 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 School 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 a 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 in accordance with tenure laws and due process provisions. Such acts may also result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal laws. In the case where such actions result in the School District incurring costs to restore the network system, hardware, software, or data, the School Board will require restitution for restoration costs.

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Ref: [47 USC 254](#) (*Children's Internet Protection Act* (CIPA))

La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§[17:81](#), [17:100.7](#), [17:280](#)

Board minutes, [11-5-98](#), [2-5-09](#), [3-12-13](#), [6-1-21](#), [6-7-22](#), [7-11-23](#)

Grant Parish School Board