

## **5.25 COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY.**

The Hingham Public Schools recognize the educational value of technology equipment and access to the Internet when used properly. The district provides computers and technology equipment for the professional use of teachers, administrators, and other staff, and as educational aids for students. Use of any of the Hingham Public Schools district's computer systems is limited to school-related activities. Staff and students should have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of the district's hardware, software, and computing services.

Use of the district's computers and technology equipment, including access to the Internet, is a privilege and requires that the user be responsible for his or her behavior and for communications over the district's networks. The policy, guidelines, and sign-off procedures for use of technology resources shall be published for staff and students and are described under Procedure 5.25A.

### **5.25A – PROCEDURE**

#### **PROCEDURE FOR INTERNET USE**

#### **Unacceptable Use of the Hingham Public Schools' computer network consists of:**

- Giving out your password.
- Copying software off of the computer, Internet, or from a disk that you did not purchase or to which you have no rights. This is prohibited by law.
- Vandalism or the act of deliberately destroying the data of another user, software programs, or hardware.
- Erasing software programs or documents that do not belong to you.
- Using access to the Internet for personal and financial gain or to advertise a service, product, or political or religious ideology.
- Providing personal information such as your name, phone number, or address – this is a very dangerous thing to do on the Internet.
- Wastefully using finite resources and time by playing games or coping or downloading excessive amounts of information.
- Accessing material on the Internet that is pornographic.
- Overriding Internet control software.

Any traffic from this network that traverses another network is subject to that network's acceptable use policy.

Security of any computer system is a top priority. If you are aware of a security problem or know of an individual who has violated that security, you are responsible for reporting that incident to the District's Manager of Technology Services.

E-Mail – or electronic mail, allows students, teachers, and administrators to communicate with each other electronically within our local area network, and to communicate with students and educators in other states or countries. E-Mail is not guaranteed to be private. It exists for the purpose of sharing information and data, lesson plans, teaching experiences, student and teacher personnel data, etc. Each user will have a unique E-Mail address so that they can send or receive mail electronically. The following are guidelines for E-Mail use:

#### **E-Mail Do's:**

- Use E-Mail to communicate and to share information of educational value.
- Keep your messages brief and to the point.
- Focus on one subject per message.
- Include your name, title, and E-Mail address at the bottom of your message.
- Make your subject line as descriptive as possible.
- Check your E-Mail daily.

- Delete unwanted messages as soon as possible – they take up space.
- Never assume your mail is private and cannot be read by someone else.

### **E-Mail Don'ts:**

- Never include your home address or phone number, social security number or credit card number in your message.
- Never send unlawful or misleading information.
- Never slander or defame someone's name or reputation.
- Never send "chain letters."
- Never sell services or products.
- Never use abusive or objectionable language.
- Never use another person's E-Mail account.
- Never send harassing email or instant messages or content.
- Never send offensive email or instance messages or content.
- Never send email or instant messages containing a virus or other malicious content.
- Never send or read email or instant messages at inappropriate times, such as during class instruction.
- Never send email or instant messages to share test answers or promote cheating in any way.

**Social Media**, broadly categorized as online communities that include subsets such as blogs, wikis, social networks, and Internet forums, can be a powerful means of disseminating information to a wide audience and connect with others online. As with email correspondence, social media postings should be respectful. Many social media sites require users to accept online terms of service or legally binding account agreements. Before engaging in social media, users are responsible to ensure that the account agreements do not violate the District's acceptable use policies. The following guidelines are in place for social media use:

- Never use another person's account or masquerade as another user.
- Never send harassing or defamatory messages or content.
- Never include your home address or phone number, social security number or credit card number in your post.
- Never send unlawful or misleading information.
- Do not post proprietary or confidential information about the District, District employees, or students.
- Do not discuss named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission.
- Do not expect that your post will be private.
- Maintain transparency as far as whether your post content reflects your personal views or if you are speaking as an authorized representative of the District.
- Do not plagiarize or engage in any copyright infringement. Use appropriate citations for ideas and passages that are not your own.
- Do not conduct business or promote personal agendas using social media while using the District's resources.

### **Consequences for Violation/Terms and Conditions**

Any violation of the above terms for what is acceptable use of the Internet will result in loss of your privileges and may result in other disciplinary measures determined by the school administration.

### **Disclaimer**

The Hingham Public Schools will not be liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the Internet through the District's Internet connection. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their actions. In addition, the Hingham Public Schools take no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through the Internet.

**6.29 COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS.** The Hingham Public Schools recognize the educational value of technology equipment and access to the Internet when used properly. The District provides computers and technology equipment for the professional use of teachers, administrators, and other staff, and as educational aids for students. Neither staff nor students should have an expectation of privacy with respect to the use of the District's hardware and software.

Use of the District's computers and technology equipment, including access to the Internet, is a privilege and requires the user to be responsible for his or her behavior and for communications over the District's networks. The policy, policy guidelines, and sign-off procedures for use of technology resources shall be published and are described for students under Procedure 6.29A.

### **6.29A – PROCEDURE**

#### **Policy Guidelines and Procedures for Internet and Technology Use**

The Hingham Public School system provides computers and technical equipment for the professional use of teachers, administrators, and other staff, and as educational aids for students. Use of any of the Hingham Public School District's computer systems is limited to school-related activities and it is expected that this use will be respectful and protective of oneself and others as well as intellectual properties. Administration and classroom systems can be re-allocated at the discretion of the school administration or technology department without advance notice.

The Hingham Public School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the computer services it is providing. Hingham Public Schools will not be responsible for any damages resulting from delays or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or its errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. Hingham Public Schools specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its computer services.

The following set of technology policy guidelines applies to all users of Hingham Public Schools' computer systems. Use of District technology resources is a privilege, not a right. Use of these resources demands personal responsibility and an understanding of acceptable uses of the Internet. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of District technology resources may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- Suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges.
- Denial of future access.
- Payments for damages and/or repairs.
- Discipline under other applicable District policies, including suspension and termination.
- Civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

Users who violate policy guidelines will be subject to disciplinary procedures. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted using the District's technology resources. These regulations may be amended and updated at the discretion of Hingham Public Schools' administration.

1. District Computers, including laptops, tablets (e.g. iPads), and Chromebooks, as well as installed software, hardware and peripheral devices, network infrastructure components (including, but not limited to servers, switches, routers, firewalls, network cables), digital resources, and District-managed cloud services content (including Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Office 365 accounts), are the property of Hingham Public Schools. Computer systems, technology devices, and network infrastructure are to be used for school-related activities, and are not to be removed from the premises without written permission from the District's Manager of Technology. Hingham Public Schools administrative staff retain the right to inspect computers at any time, including via electronic remote access, and to alter, add or delete installed software or hardware.

2. The use of a user's personal electronic device (including, but not limited to, device classifications such as smartphones, computers, and tablets) on the school network or on the District's Internet connection subjects the user to the terms of this policy.
3. Users should not have any expectation of privacy with respect to personal data stored on Hingham Public Schools' computers. Electronic mail (E-mail) messages are considered public records and are therefore legally discoverable and subject to record retention. Users should not expect that electronic mail messages (even those marked "Personal") are private or confidential.
4. The Hingham Public School system may monitor electronic mail and Internet activities on the schools' computer systems for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. system checks
  - b. reviews of productivity
  - c. investigations into claims of possible criminal activity
  - d. investigations into inappropriate use of the District's Internet connection
5. Use of the District's computer systems constitutes consent to monitoring of E-mail transmissions and other online services, and is conditioned upon strict adherence to this policy.
6. The following activities are strictly prohibited:
  - a. Any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, the transmission of copyright or trade secret material, or the participation in any type of criminal activity.
  - b. Attempts to violate the computer security systems implemented by the Hingham Public Schools, Town of Hingham, or other institutions, organizations, companies or individuals.
  - c. Accessing material that is inappropriate for school use, such as Internet sites promoting pornography, gambling, or hate.
  - d. Attempts to circumvent the Internet filtering capabilities of the Hingham Public Schools or the school systems' Internet provider(s).
  - e. Plagiarism, or any reproduction of copyrighted material without explicit permission.
  - f. The use of profanity or inappropriate language in electronic mail.
  - g. Use of school computer systems for political or commercial purposes.
  - h. Using school computer systems to send unsolicited bulk E-mail (SPAM).
  - i. Developing or disseminating malicious software programs, such as computer viruses.
  - j. Downloading, installing, or copying any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks without written permission from the network administrator or the District's Technology Manager.
  - k. Misrepresentation of your identity by using another user's account, or by masking your own identity.
7. No profane, abusive, or impolite language should be used to communicate, nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Should a user encounter such material by accident, the user should report it to an appropriate authority immediately.
8. Postings to social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram must not include confidential or proprietary information about the District, District employees or students. Do not discuss named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission.
9. In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Hingham has installed filtering and/or blocking software to restrict access to Internet sites containing material harmful to minors. The software scans for objectionable words or concepts, as determined by the Hingham Public School District. Students and staff may not disable the District's filtering software at any time when students are using the Internet if such disabling will cease to protect students against access to inappropriate materials. Staff authorized by

the District's Manager of Technology may temporarily or permanently unblock access to sites containing appropriate materials if the filtering software has inappropriately blocked access to such sites.

10. Staff must supervise student use of the District's Internet system in a manner that is appropriate to the students' ages and the circumstances of use.
11. The following restrictions against inappropriate speech and messages apply to all speech communicated and accessed through the District technology resources, including all email, instant messages, Web pages, and Web logs:
  - a. Users shall not send obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful messages.
  - b. Users shall not post information that could cause damage, danger, or disruption, or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - c. Users shall not harass other persons, or knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
  - d. Users shall not obfuscate or make false claims about their identity or accomplishments.
12. Users' home and personal Internet use can have an impact on the school and on other District users. If a user's personal Internet expression - such as sending a threatening message to another District user - creates, in the view of the principal or principal's designee, the likelihood of material disruption of the school's operations, that user may face school discipline and criminal penalties.
13. Hingham takes bullying and harassment by computer very seriously. No District user shall use any Internet or other communication device to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass other students or staff members. Users who engage in such activity on school grounds or who engage in such activity off campus and create a material disruption of school operations, in the view of the principal, shall be subject to penalties for bullying and harassment as contained in the student handbook, as well as possible criminal penalties.
14. Users should not alter any computer, technology devices, hardware or software. Do not remove or interfere with the serial number or identification tags.

In the event of an allegation that a student has violated this policy, the District will provide the user with notice and an opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the student handbook.