

**Bessemer City Schools**

**INTERNET**

**USAGE**

**POLICY**

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## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Bessemer City Schools are pleased to make available to students access to computers, computer systems, and the Internet for educational purposes. The goal of the district is to provide innovation and educational excellence by the use of computers, computer systems, and the Internet for research, worldwide resource sharing, and communication. For the purposes of this acceptable use policy, the term "computer" is intended to have a broad interpretation. "Computer" as used herein, means the computer itself, along with all of the accessories and peripherals used in connection with the computer such as, but not limited to, servers, backup drives, backup disks, network servers, communication servers, modems, Internet access software, CD ROMs, CD drives, printers, software, stored data, computer hardware, e-mail, and any and all data and programs used on computers. All use of computers must be in support of education, research, or business applications consistent with the purposes of the school district. The use of computers in the school district in no way indicates a desire by the school district to create a designated or limited public forum through their usage.

### I. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

All students must read and review this policy with their parents, then sign, with their parents, and return the signature page at the end of this policy to the student's teacher. All students, regardless of age, must have his or her parents or guardians read and sign the signature page at the end of this policy. The school district cannot provide computer access to any student who fails to return a signed signature page as directed. By signing the signature page of this policy, students agree to follow the rules of this policy and to report any misuse of computers and computer equipment. By signing the signature page of this policy, parents are indicating that they have read the policy and accept its terms and conditions.

### II. TERM OF THE PERMITTED USE

Students who submit a properly signed signature page for this policy and who follow this policy will have computer access during the course of the school year. Students will be asked to sign a new acceptable use policy signature page each year in which they are students, before they are given an access account.

### III. ACCEPTABLE USES

This section of the policy describes uses of computers in the school district that are considered acceptable.

#### Examples of What Responsible Computer Users May Do

1. Use computing facilities for educational purposes only. Students who have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational may consult with their teacher or with the school district's designated supervisor over computer uses.
  2. Research for assigned classroom projects, as directed by the teacher.
  3. Send electronic mail (e-mail) to other users, as directed or permitted by the teacher.
  4. Explore other computer systems in a legally-appropriate manner.
  5. Use the system efficiently, in terms of time, disk space, and printer facilities, in accordance with the following priority of uses:
    - (first priority) system administration and maintenance;
    - (second priority) administrator, teacher, and staff use;
    - (third priority) student use for group activities assigned by the teacher;
    - (fourth priority) student use by individual students pursuant to activities assigned by the teacher;
    - (fifth priority) individual student use without assigned activity by the teacher;
    - (sixth priority) individual student use for games.
- Lower priority users should give up their access to higher priority users when requested.
6. Be aware that the computing facilities are as secure as possible but that a user determined enough will break into the system. Therefore, confidential material should be stored on a school account.
  7. Change passwords frequently, to ensure security.
  8. Use the computer and computer system in a safe manner.

#### **IV. UNACCEPTABLE USES**

This section of the policy describes uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of the Acceptable Use Policy. Whether described as behaviors that one may not do or described as improper etiquette, such behaviors are considered unacceptable and constitute a violation of the policy, although the range of consequences for violation may vary according to the severity of the behavior.

##### **Examples of What Responsible Computer Users May NOT Do**

1. Engage in illegal activity.
2. Violate the law or encourage others to violate the law.
3. Use the system to offer for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by the school district's student code of conduct.
4. Use the system to view, transmit, or download pornographic materials.
5. Use the system to communicate or send impolite, abusive, vulgar, lewd, indecent, or obscene language or pictures, or to communicate with swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.
6. Use the system to threaten, harass, or bully others.
7. Use the system to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material that is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, or religion.
8. Use the system in a way that causes harm to others or damage to their property or reputation.
9. Use the mail system to hinder the ability of others to work, or to harass, intimidate, or otherwise annoy a person.
10. Change computer files that do not belong to the user.
11. Send or receive copyrighted material without permission from the copyright owner.
12. Download or upload copyrighted software.
13. Forward or re-post the personal information of another user without his or her permission.
14. Send material over the Internet with someone else's name as author, without permission.
15. Share a password with others or allow others to use a password to access the computer or Internet.
16. Use the computer system for personal financial gain or profit.
17. Use the computer system for the commercial exchange of goods or services.

##### **Network Online Etiquette (Netiquette)**

All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

1. Be polite and use appropriate language.
2. Don't assume that a sender of email is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties.
3. Don't give another person's email address to a third party without getting permission from the other person.
4. Be considerate when sending attachments with email. Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipients system and is in a format that the recipient can open.
5. Compose email and bulletins off-line in order to reduce unnecessary network traffic.
6. Make your "subject line" as descriptive as possible.
7. Always include a salutation before your message: "Dear John. . ."
8. Always sign your name and tell where you are from. If possible, include your email address.
9. Always restate or describe the question that you are answering or the issue on which you are commenting.
10. Always acknowledge that you have received a document or file that some has sent you.
11. Check your email once or twice a week if you are expecting replies.
12. Delete email once you have read it.
13. Don't send personal messages on conferences, bulletin boards, or digests.
14. Don't expect an answer in less than 2-3 days.
15. When sending a file, give as much information as possible, including length, type, and contents.
16. Conference and bulletin board messages represent your abilities. Proofread and edit all messages.
17. Take care with the way you express yourself. Electronic text allows no context clues to convey shades of irony, sarcasm, or harmless humor.
18. Don't publicly criticize (or "flame") other network users.
19. Protect others' privacy.

20. Be careful not to spread computer viruses. Always check downloaded files.
21. Don't leave a workstation unattended while a session is in progress (dangerous to personal files and belongings, reputation, and security).

## **V. INTERNET SAFETY**

This section of the policy addresses concerns about the safety of student users and the integrity of the computer system.

### **General Warning:**

**Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users.** All student users and their parents and guardians are advised that access to electronic materials may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from inappropriate sites. Parents of minors are the best guides to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to a teacher or the school district's supervisor over computer uses.

### **Personal Safety**

Students are urged to be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, students should not reveal personal information such as home address or telephone number. Students should not use his or her real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate the student without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher or parent or guardian. Students must not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone the student "meets" on the computer network or Internet without parental permission. Regardless of one's age, one should never agree to meet a person with whom they have communicated only on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.

### **Hacking and Other Illegal Activities**

It is a violation of this policy to use the school's computer system to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

### **Confidentiality of Student Information**

Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the computer, computer system, or Internet, without the permission of a parent or guardian, or if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself or herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release of directory information, as defined by Alabama law, for internal administrative purposes or approved educational projects and activities.

### **Active Restriction Measures**

The school district will use filtering software and/or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. The school district will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material that is inappropriate for minors.

Internet filtering software or other technology-based protection systems may be disabled by contacting the school district's supervisor over computer uses, as necessary, for purposes of bona fide research or other educational projects being conducted by students age 17 or older.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. Section 254(b)(7)), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image, file, or other depiction that (1) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (2) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable to minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated, normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; (3) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

### **Privacy**

Computer, computer network and Internet access is provided as a tool for education. The school district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of computers and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the school district and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials. As such, all such information files remain under joint use doctrine for the purpose of search and seizure purposes.

### **VI. FAILURE TO FOLLOW POLICY**

Failure to follow this acceptable use policy subjects the student user to a variety of penalties, including loss of access to computers in the school district or consequences outlined in the school district's code of conduct. A student user of computers in the school district violates this policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations of this policy by other users that come to the attention of the student. Further, a student user violates this policy if he or she permits another person to use his or her account or password to access a computer, the computer network, or Internet, including any other user whose access has been denied or terminated.

### **VII. WARRANTIES/INDEMNIFICATION**

The school district makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of computers, its computer networks, and the Internet provided under this policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages, or costs, including attorney's fees, of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of the school district's computer equipment under this policy. By signing this policy, users are taking full responsibility for his or her use, and the user who is 18 years of age or older or, in the case of a user under age 18, the parent(s) or guardian(s) are agreeing to indemnify and hold the school, school district, the data acquisition site that provides the computer and Internet access opportunity to the school district and all of the school district's administrators, teachers, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims, or damages resulting from the user's access to the school district's computers, computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to cooperate with the school in the event of the school's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to the school's computer network and the Internet, whether that use is on a school computer or on another computer outside the school district's network.

### **VIII. UPDATES**

Users, and if appropriate, the user's parents/guardians, may be asked from time to time to provide new or additional registration and account information or to sign a new policy signature page, for example, to reflect developments in the law or technology. Such information must be provided by the user (or his or her parents or guardians) or such new policy signature page must be signed if the user wishes to continue to receive service. If after the user has provided account information, some or all of the information changes, the user must notify the user's teacher or the supervisor over the district's computer uses.

SOURCE: Bessemer City Board of Education, Bessemer, AL.

ADOPTED:

LEGAL REF.: Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (H.R. 4577, P.L. 106-554); Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254 (h)(7)); Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6801, et. Seq., Part F); Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 108 S.Ct. 562 (1988); Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser, 106 S.Ct. 3159 (1986); Perry Education Assn. V. Perry Local Educators Assn., 103 S.Ct. 948 (1983).

● **BESSEMER CITY SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY  
AGREEMENT/PERMISSION FORM**

STUDENT NAME (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to all the terms outlined in the Bessemer City Schools' Technology Usage Policy. I further understand that, as a user on the Bessemer City Schools' network, I am responsible for my actions and I am responsible to act considerately and appropriately when using any Bessemer City Schools Technology Resource.

I understand that any or all of the following sanctions could be imposed if I violate any policy and/or procedure regarding the use of any Bessemer City Schools Technology Resource.

- Loss of access
- Additional disciplinary action determined as appropriate at a specific school
- Legal action, when applicable

STUDENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to all terms as outlined in the Bessemer City Schools' Technology Usage Policy. I also understand that this agreement will be binding during the entire career of my child at the Jackson S. Abrams Elementary School.

- ☐ My child MAY use e-mail while at school according to the rules outlined.
- ☐ My child MAY NOT use e-mail while at school.
- ☐ My child MAY use the Internet while at school according to the rules outlined.
- ☐ My child MAY NOT use the Internet while at school.

PARENT NAME (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

# BESSEMER CITY SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY

## Discipline Notification

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_,

This letter is to inform you that your son/daughter has violated the Bessemer City Schools' Technology Usage Policy (TUP). You and your child signed a TUP which statd that if you violate the terms of this policy, you may lose privileges or receive punishment as defined in the code of conduct.

This letter is to notify you that \_\_\_\_\_  
was found to be in violation of the TUP as described below: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As a result of this, we are thinking of the following disciplinary action(s):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Sending a warning reminder to parent and student about the TUP agreement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Loss of Internet privileges for one week
- \_\_\_\_\_ Loss of Internet privileges for one month
- \_\_\_\_\_ Permanent loss of Internet privileges
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other disciplinary actions as defined below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions, feel free to consult you copy of the TUP, or call us during the day. We appreciate you suppor and understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,

## **SUMMARY OF US COPYRIGHT LAW**

This is a non-authoritative summation of US Copyright law as it relates to computer software.

### **Copyright Law and Software Licensing:**

- Computer software may be protected by federal copyright law
- Most software available in the Bessemer City School District is proprietary and is protected by licensing agreements in addition to the copyright law, and therefore should not be copied.
- Special provisions for copying may be granted by the copyright owner and will be specified within the software package, documentation or license agreement. Read and understand these provisions carefully before making any copies.
- Under no circumstances should copyrighted software be distributed outside the Bessemer City School District through any mechanism, electronic or otherwise.
- The user is responsible for being aware of licensing restrictions for the software used. Lack of knowledge does not justify a violation of the law.
- When in doubt, do not copy. Violation of copyright law or licensing agreements may result in disciplinary action and/or legal action.
- In order to receive support from the Technology Department, Networking Services, Instruction Computing or vendors, you may be asked to produce manuals, original diskettes, serial number or other proof of proper software licensing. In addition, vendors normally require proof of ownership to upgrade to a new version of the product.



I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to all terms as outlined in the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that this agreement will be kept on file at the school for the academic year in which it was signed.

Signature

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be from a notebook or a standard writing pad. There is no handwriting or other markings on the page.