

HUMAN RESOURCES

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR DISTRICT COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND THE INTERNET

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide the procedures, rules, guidelines and code of conduct for the use of technology and the information network in the Gadsden Independent School District. Use of such technology is a necessary element of the School District educational mission, but is furnished to staff and students as a privilege, not a right. The School District seeks to protect legitimate users of technology by establishing limits on such use and sanctions for those who abuse the privilege. Eliminating computer abuse provides more computing resources for users with legitimate needs.

Participants:

All GISD technology users.

Process:

DEFINITIONS: The definition of information networks is any configuration of hardware and software which connects users. The network includes all of the computer hardware, operating system software, application software, stored text and data files. This includes electronic mail, local databases, externally-accessed databases, CD-ROM, recorded magnetic or optical media, clip art, digital images, digitized information, communication technologies and new technologies as they become available. Stand alone work stations are also governed by this policy on acceptable use of the School District computer system. As used herein, the user shall mean the system operations, staff members, account holders, and authorized students afforded access and use of the School District computer system as part of the School District curriculum under the supervision and as monitored by an authorized user.

INTRODUCTION: The Gadsden Independent School District provides resources for teaching and learning, communication services, and business data services by the acquisition of computer equipment and maintaining access to local, regional, national, and international sources of information. The School District permits use of its computer system and information resources by students and staff who must maintain respect for the public trust through which they have been provided, in accordance with policy and procedures established by the School District. These procedures do not attempt to articulate all required or prescribed behavior by its users. Successful operation of the computer system and network requires that all users conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical and polite manner while using the network. The user is ultimately responsible for his/her actions in accessing network services.

GUIDELINES:

1. Access to the computer system, information networks and to the information technology environment within the School District's system is a privilege and must be treated as such by all users of the network and its associated systems.
2. The School District's system will be used solely for the purpose of research, education, and school-related business and operations.
3. Any system which requires password access or for which the School District requires an account, such as Internet, shall only be used by the authorized user. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account and shall abide by this policy and the School District's computer and Internet Code of Conduct.
4. The School District's technological resources are limited. All users must exercise prudence in the shared use of this resource. The School District reserves the right to limit use of such resources if there are insufficient funds, accounts, storage, memory, or for other reasons deemed necessary by the system operators, or if an individual user is determined to be acting in an irresponsible or unlawful manner.
5. All communications and information accessible and accessed via the School District's system is and shall remain the property of the School District.
6. Student use shall be supervised and monitored by system operators and authorized staff and shall be related to the School District curriculum.
7. Any defects or suspected abuse in system accounting, security, hardware or software, shall be reported to the system operators.

UNACCEPTABLE USE:

The Gadsden Independent School District has the right to take disciplinary action, remove computer and networking privileges, or take legal action or report to proper authorities, any activity characterized as unethical, unacceptable or unlawful. Unacceptable use activities constitute, but are not limited to, any activity through which any user:

1. Violates such matters as institutional or third party copyright, license agreements or other contracts. The unauthorized use of and/or copying of software is illegal.
2. Interferes with or disrupts other network users, services or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer viruses or worms, distributing quantities of information that overwhelm the system (chain letters, network games, etc.) and/or using the network to make unauthorized entry into any other resource accessible via the network.
3. Seeks to gain or gains unauthorized access to information resources, obtains copies of, or modifies files or other data, or gains and communicates passwords belonging to other users.

4. Uses or knowingly allows another to use any computer, computer network, computer system, program, or software to devise or execute a scheme to defraud or to obtain money, property, services, or other things of value by false pretenses, promises, or representations.
5. Destroys, alters, dismantles, disfigures, prevents rightful access to, or otherwise interferes with the integrity of computer-based information resources, whether on stand alone or networked computers.
6. Invades the privacy of individuals or entities.
7. Uses the network for commercial or political activity or personal or private gain.
8. Installs unauthorized software for use on district computers.
9. Uses the network to access inappropriate materials.
10. Uses the School District system to compromise its integrity (hacking software) or accesses, modifies, obtains copies of or alters restricted or confidential records or files.
11. Submits, publishes or displays any defamatory, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private.
12. Uses the School District system for illegal, harassing, vandalizing, inappropriate, or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities is prohibited. Illegal activities shall be defined as a violation of local, state, and/or federal laws. Harassment is defined as slurs, comments, jokes, innuendos, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, pranks, and/or other verbal conduct relating to an individual which: (a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance; or (c) interferes with school operations. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy the operating system, application software or data. Inappropriate use shall be defined as a violation of the purpose and goal of the network. Obscene activities shall be defined as a violation of generally-accepted social standards in the community for use of a publicly-owned and operated communication device.
13. Violates the School District Computer and Internet Code of Conflict.

SCHOOL DISTRICT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Monitor all activity on the School District's system.
2. Determine whether specific uses of the network are consistent with this acceptable use policy or the Computer and Internet Code of Conduct.
3. Remove a user's access to the network at any time it is determined that the user is engaged in unauthorized activity or violating this

acceptable use policy or the Computer and Internet Code of Conduct.

4. Respect the privacy of individual user electronic data. The district will secure the consent of users before accessing their data, unless required to do so by law or policies of the Gadsden Independent School District.
5. Take prudent steps to develop, implement and maintain security procedures to ensure the integrity of individual and district files. However, information on any computer system cannot be guaranteed to be inaccessible by other users.
6. Attempt to provide error free and dependable access to technology resources associated with the School District system. However, the district cannot be held liable for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties.
7. Ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by the district's acceptable use policy and administrative regulations. All such agreements will be maintained on file in the school office.

VIOLATIONS/CONSEQUENCES:

1. Staff:
 - (a) Staff who violate this policy or the Computer and Internet Code of Conduct shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension, termination or discharge, in accordance with Board policy, negotiated agreements and applicable law.
 - (b) Violations of law will be reported to law enforcement officials.

GUIDELINES FOR GISD TECHNOLOGY USERS

I. E-Mail.

To maximize the benefits of its computer resources and minimize potential liability, the School District has created this policy. All computer users are obligated to use these resources responsibly, professionally, ethically, and lawfully. The School Board's Policy on E-Mail and Electronic Communications is incorporated herein by reference. All Users of computer district resources are expected to familiarize themselves with the policy.

You are given access to our computer network to assist you in performing your job. You do not have an expectation of privacy in anything you create, store, send, or receive on the computer system. The computer system belongs to the School District and may only be used for business or education program purposes. Without prior written notice, the School District may review any material created, stored, sent, or received on its network or through the Internet or any other computer network.

Use of computer resources for any of the following activities is strictly prohibited:

- A. Sending, receiving, downloading, displaying, printing, or otherwise disseminating material that is sexually explicit, profane, obscene, harassing, fraudulent, intimidating, threatening or potentially violent, racially offensive, defamatory, proselytizing, inappropriate or otherwise unlawful or in violation of School Board policy;
- B. Disseminating or storing commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs (including but not limited to, viruses or self-replicating code), political or religious information, or any;
- C. Wasting computer resources by, among other things, sending or forwarding mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet, playing games, sending or forwarding jokes, engaging in online chat groups, printing multiple copies of documents, or otherwise creating unnecessary network traffic;
- D. Using or copying software in violation of a license agreement or copyright;
- E. Alteration of the "From:" line or other attribution of origin on your e-mail.
- F. Anonymous or pseudonymous messages are forbidden.
- G. Violating any state, federal, international law or local board policy.

If you become aware of someone using computer resources for any of these activities, you are obligated to report the incident immediately to your supervisor.

You should never consider your electronic communications to be either private or secure. Hazards of electronic communication include: storage indefinitely on any number of computers, including that of the recipient; messages may be forwarded to others either electronically or on paper; e-mail may be sent to nonexistent or incorrect usernames may be delivered to persons that you never intended.

In using the e-mail system, you must *THINK before sending a message*. It is very important that you use the same care and discretion in drafting e-mail as you would for any other written communication. Anything created or stored on the computer may, and likely will, be reviewed by others.

Violations of these guidelines will be taken seriously and may result in revocation of e-mail or computer use privileges as well as disciplinary action, including possible termination or discharge, and civil and criminal liability.

II. CHAIN OR MASS E-MAIL

The School District provides its computer system and access to e-mail for legitimate business purposes only. Every user is expected to use good judgement when using the e-mail system. Sending Chain e-mail, nonbusiness, or nonprogram related mass e-mail violates this standard and will not be tolerated.

Chain e-mail is a message sent to a number of people asking each recipient to send copies with the same request to a specified number of others. *Mass e-mail* is a message sent to a large number of recipients (for example, all employees) without any legitimate business or education program purpose. Sending either type of messages wastes our computer resources and delays delivery of essential e-mail. Circulating chain e-mail, in particular, can result in an enormous volume of messages on the network. The number of messages increases geometrically if the instructions are followed by all recipients. This can seriously degrade network performance and consume substantial amounts of valuable disk space and computer memory.

Users will delete all chain e-mail and all nonbusiness- or nonprogram-related mass e-mail immediately upon receipt and refrain from forwarding them to any other employees. Any employee receiving a chain e-mail or a nonbusiness- or nonprogram-related mass e-mail should report the incident to the School District's [computer resources officer].

Users found to be involved in sending chain e-mail or nonbusiness- or nonprogram-related mass e-mail may be subject to disciplinary action, including revocation of e-mail privileges, termination or discharge.

I have read and agree to comply with these guidelines and the School District's policies governing use of computer resources, and understand that a violation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or discharge, as well as civil or criminal liability.

Employee Name _____

Employee Signature _____

Employee Work Site _____

Date: _____

Timeline:

The enforcement of this policy is ongoing.

Adopted: 10/28/97

Policy GBBC

Amended: 2/07/02

Human Resources

Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose:

To ensure the appropriate use of district technology.

Participants:

All Employees

Process:

Access to the computer Internet is afforded to the students and employees of GISD for purposes of professional and instructional development. This policy was developed to clarify the position of the district in regards to accessing of the Internet by our employees. The use of district facilities and equipment of materials and equipment for uses other than what would be deemed educationally or professionally appropriate is prohibited.

It is expected that all employees abide by the following policies:

1. The right to privacy is essential to the appropriate use of district technology. Users shall not intentionally obtain copies of or modify files, passwords, or data that belong to anyone else. Employees should not represent themselves as someone else for the purposes of accessing another's account. Personal material should not be relayed without the consent of the originator.
2. All users must respect copyright laws for computer programs, books, articles and data afforded legal protection by the law.
3. The development of programs designed to harass or sabotage other programs is prohibited.
4. Electronic Mail is to be limited to issues directly related to professional concerns and is not guaranteed to be private. Abuses of E-Mail will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
5. Users must abide by existing Federal and State Laws in force regarding electronic communication. This includes accessing information without authorization, giving passwords out, or causing a system to malfunction.
6. Any unauthorized expense incurred while using the Internet will be the responsibility of the User.
7. Abuses of access could result in a refusal by the District to allow individuals continued access of district technological equipment and services. In addition, violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including discharge.

USER'S FULL NAME: _____ DATE: _____

POSITION: _____ SITE: _____

I understand and will abide by the Gadsden Independent School District Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of this policy is unethical and could result in the filing of criminal charges. I also understand that GISD may take disciplinary action in regards to infractions of this policy, up to and including discharge.

USER'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Timeline: