



Book	Policy Manual
Section	800 Operations
Title	Acceptable Use and Internet Safety
Code	815
Status	Active
Adopted	June 21, 2004
Last Revised	February 22, 2021
Prior Revised Dates	4/24/2012

### **Acceptable Use**

The Midd-West School Board requires that all users of the Midd-West School District Network read and agree to the terms set forth in the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy before signing the Acceptable Use Agreement. Failure to comply with the terms of this Agreement could result in the cancellation of the user's account and/or computer usage privileges. Students will also need signed parental permission to use the Internet.

#### **Purpose**

The goal of the Midd-West School District Network is to promote educational excellence in the District by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication that is consistent with the District's curriculum, policies and mission. The Midd-West School District Network is to be used to promote the exchange of information for educational purposes. Non-educational activities are prohibited.

The smooth operation of the Midd-West School District Network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. The end users are responsible for the manner in which they access or transmit information through the Midd-West School District Network and Internet. The Midd-West School District Network is to be used for educational purposes such as, daily operations, classroom activities, professional or career development and administrative applications. This policy is intended to provide the guidelines and responsibilities of the end user in regards to acceptable use of the Midd-West School District Network.

#### **Authority**

The electronic information available to students and staff via the Midd-West School District Network does not imply endorsement by the Midd-West School District, nor does the school district guarantee the accuracy of information received. The Midd-West School District will not be responsible for any information lost, damaged or unavailable when using the Network or for any information that is retrieved over the Internet. The School District shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

The Internet is a vast global Network connecting a great number of computers around the world, and therefore inappropriate materials, including those that may be profane, pornographic or otherwise offensive, may be accessed through the Network. The Midd-West School District has technology in place

to block out this inappropriate material, but due to the increasing size of the Internet, it is impossible to completely block out all inappropriate material. Accessing these and similar types of resources will be considered an unacceptable use of school resources and will result in suspension of Network privileges and/or disciplinary action as outlined in appropriate District policies.

The Midd-West School District reserves the right to monitor and log Network use as well as restrict storage space and bandwidth utilization. The use of the Midd-West School District Network is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use will result in cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action. Excess e-mail or files taking up an inordinate amount of fileserver disk space may be removed by system administrators, after a reasonable time and after notification to the user.

### Netiquette

Users are expected to abide by the generally excepted rules of Network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your message to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
3. Do not reveal your personal address, Network password or telephone number of students or colleagues.
4. Note that electronic mail and Network folders are not guaranteed to be private. Building and system administrators reserve the right to review all system content. Message relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
5. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the Network by other users.

### **Guidelines**

It is essential for each user on the Network to recognize his/her responsibility in having access to vast services, systems and people. The user is ultimately responsible for actions in accessing Network services. Users of the Network must abide by the following rules. The following operational activities and behaviors are prohibited:

1. The Midd-West School District Network may not be used for: (a) private, commercial, for-profit or business (except where such activities are otherwise permitted or authorized under appropriate District policies); (b) unauthorized fund raising; (c) advertising; or (d) unauthorized use of the District's name.
2. Product advertisements and political lobbying or organizing is prohibited.
3. Use of the Midd-West School District Network to access obscene or pornographic material is expressly prohibited.
4. Sending offensive or objectionable materials to recipients is expressly prohibited.
5. Using programs that harass Midd-West School District Network users or infiltrate a computing system and/or damage the software components is expressly prohibited.
6. Use of the Midd-West School District Network for hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, offensive and/or inflammatory communications or to transmit offensive or objectionable material to recipients.
7. Use of the Midd-West School District Network to transmit inappropriate, rude, vulgar, lewd, profane, inflammatory, threatening and disrespectful language.

8. Use of the Midd-West School District Network to impersonate or misrepresent other users, or the use of anonymity, pseudonyms, encryption or other technology to avoid detection or identification.

#### Software and Hardware

1. District computers are configured and maintained for educational and administrative purposes only and should not be viewed as the personal equipment of the user. Therefore, the right is reserved to restrict configuration and installation of software and hardware on all District computers.
2. Any software installed on District computers must be licensed in accordance with the law. A separate license must be purchased for each computer upon which the software is installed. A copy of all licenses must be forwarded to the Technology Department staff before installation.
3. Users may not make unauthorized copies of copyrighted software.
4. Users may not install any unauthorized games, programs, files or other electronic media on District computers.
5. Users may not move or remove equipment or install/configure hardware or software without authorization by the Technology Department staff.
6. Users may not physically damage or destroy hardware or do so by the installation of worms or viruses. Vandalism, including theft of computer components, will result in monetary damages paid by the perpetrator, as well as disciplinary action according to District policy.

#### System Security

1. Users may not give others access (via password or other means) to computing resources which they are not entitled.
2. Users' passwords should be combination of letters, numbers and symbols.
3. Users may not use a computer that has been logged in under another student or employee's name.
4. Users may not modify technology resources, utilities, and/or configurations, or change the restrictions associated with their accounts, or attempt to breach any technology resources security system, whether with malicious intent or not.
5. Users may not engage in malicious hacking, i.e., deliberately breaking into a system to alter or damage it for the purpose of getting illegitimate access to resources or information.
6. Users may not create, implement or host their own servers or services using District resources.
7. Administrative or office computers should be utilized for their intended functions and should not be available to other users for general or personal use.

#### Privacy

1. Users are responsible for the use of their individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account, including logging off when away from the computer, especially if the computer is in an educational or insecure workplace setting. Unless authorized, users should not provide their password to another person. In the event that a user's password/login is used by another in violation of the Midd-West School District Acceptable use Policy, both parties will be subject to consequences which may include, but are not limited to the loss of Network privileges as well as possible disciplinary action as outlined in appropriate District policies.
2. Users may not read, execute, modify or delete any file belonging to someone else without explicit permission from the owner, even if the file is unprotected.
3. An authorized system administrator may remove or alter as necessary user files that threaten to interfere with the operation of the Network or as needed for system maintenance such as files infected with a virus, unauthorized programs that have adverse effects to the infrastructure or copyright infringements. The system administrator should make every effort to notify the user

prior to such action to give the user opportunity to remove such files him/herself. It is recognized that there may be special cases where the threat to the effectiveness of the system resources is so immediate that prior notification is not possible.

4. Users are responsible for creating backup copies of critical files.
5. The use of personal (non-district) computers and or hardware (printers, etc.) on the Network will not be supported. Personal computers should be registered with the Technology Department and include appropriate serial numbers and ownership information. The District is not liable for any damage done to personal computers. District-owned hardware components may not be installed in a personal computer.
6. Users have no expectation of privacy in their e-mail messages and/or files that are contained within the Midd-West School District Network. The Midd-West School District may intercept or access files and/or e-mails at any time for any reason.

#### E-mail

1. District e-mail is to be used for educational purposes or District related business.
2. District e-mail is not to be used for personal advertisement or business, to forward chain letters or other mass mailings that are not school related.
3. Students using the Midd-West School District Network will be provided with school e-mail accounts and are not authorized to access their personal e-mail accounts while at school.
4. Users may not repost a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.
5. Excess e-mail or files taking up an inordinate amount of fileserver disk space may be removed by system administrators, after a reasonable time and after notification to the user.
6. Users may not post private information about another person.
7. Network users have no privacy expectation in their e-mail messages. The District may intercept or access stored communication at any time for any reason.
8. Users may not use vulgar, abusive, profane or other offensive language in District e-mail.
9. Users may not discuss illegal activities on District e-mail.

#### Inappropriate Access to Material

1. Users may not use, attempt to use, or direct the use of the District Internet system to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature).
2. If a user inadvertently accesses such information, he or she must immediately disclose the inadvertent access in a manner specified by his or her teacher or building administrator. This will protect users against an allegation that they have intentionally violated the Acceptable use Policy.

#### Protection

1. The District has a software filter in place whose purpose is to block access to websites which may contain visual depictions and text that are obscene, contain child pornography, are harmful to minors with respect to use by minors, or that are determined inappropriate for use of minors by the School Board. As with any software filter, there are no guarantees that the filters will block 100% of the offensive material all the time.
2. An Internet usage log will be maintained and online activities of users may be monitored.
3. Students are prohibited from unauthorized disclosure or dissemination of personal identification, including but not limited to the student's first or last name, address, telephone number, picture or e-mail address.

4. District employees are prohibited from the unauthorized disclosure or dissemination of information about students' records, including but not limited to the student's first or last name, address, telephone number, picture or e-mail address.
5. Routine maintenance of the system may lead to the discovery that the user has or is violating the District's Acceptable Use Policy, the discipline policy or the law.
6. An individual search may be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or the District policies. The nature of the investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the alleged violation.
7. The expression, publication or distribution of obscene, libelous or slanderous materials, or materials which encourage students to commit unlawful acts, violate lawful School District regulations or cause material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the School District, are prohibited.
8. When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will select material that is appropriate for the age of the students and that is relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will preview the materials and sites they require. Teachers will provide guidelines and lists of resources to assist their students in their research activities. Teachers will assist their students in developing the skills to ascertain the truthfulness of information and to distinguish fact from opinion.

9. Internet downloads will be restricted to those files that have an educational purpose within the guidelines of the curriculum or in accordance with the requirements of one's job position.

#### Chat Rooms and Other Direct Electronic Communications (e.g., Instant Messaging Services)

1. Students are prohibited from access to chat rooms, Internet e-mail or instant messaging software, services and servers.
2. Teachers may utilize online chats and instant messaging for educational purposes only. Students may observe these activities but may not be administrator of such activities.

#### Copyright Issues

1. Users will be subject to Federal Copyright Law:

U.S. Copyright law grants authors certain exclusive rights of reproduction, adaptation, distribution, performance, display, attribution and integrity to their creations, including works of literature, photographs, music, software, film and video. Violations of copyright laws include, but are not limited to, the making of unauthorized copies of any copyrighted material (such as commercial software, text, graphic images, audio and video recordings), distributing copyrighted materials over computer networks or through other means, and framing other website material and representing it as your own.

2. Users may not plagiarize. Teachers will instruct students in appropriate research and citation practices.

#### District Website

1. District employees may not officially or unofficially represent the School District on non-District websites. The Midd-West School District is not liable for information posted on a non-District site.
2. Groups associated with the Midd-West School District, including but limited to, booster clubs, parent organizations, band associations or other associations representing District activities, may not establish websites representing a School District affiliated group without review by the Technology Department before it is posted.
3. The District website was created with the intent of presenting information about the District. The Technology Department will be responsible for the creation of, maintenance of and posting to the website. All web pages will be posted at the discretion of and by the Technology Department.
4. Schools and classes may establish web pages that present information about the school or class activities or for educational purposes. Teachers are responsible for the content created by their

students. Student-created web pages will be posted at the discretion of and by the Technology Department.

5. With the approval of the Technology Department, extracurricular organizations may establish web pages. Advisors to the activities will be responsible for the content. Material presented on the organization web page must relate specifically to organizational activities. Disclaimers may be required stating that "Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the Midd-West School District." The Technology Department will post organizational web pages, unless otherwise stipulated by the Technology Department.
6. Users will not have access to posting information on the authorized District websites, unless otherwise stipulated by the Technology Department.
7. Any links occurring on District web pages must be done in accordance with the law and must be linked to sites that have an educational purpose. When links are used on a District web page, a reference must be made that states that "the Midd-West School District is not responsible for information contained on linked sites."
8. The Technology Department reserves the right to edit or remove any material posted to any of the authorized District websites.
9. Advertising for commercial, political or religious purposes is prohibited on District web pages.
10. Threats or intimidating statements made in reference to persons within or outside the Midd-West School District are prohibited from being posted on any District website or resource.

#### Student Confidentiality

Information electronically published on the Midd-West School District Network, including but not limited to, the District's World Wide Web Pages shall be subject to the following guidelines:

1. Published documents or video conferences may not include a student's telephone number, street address or box number, or names of other family members.
2. Documents or video conferences may not include information which indicates the physical location of a student at a given time other than the attendance at a particular school or participation in school activities.
3. Digital photographs and/or published video material must be limited to the head/neck area of the student.

#### Sanctions

1. Students and employees must be aware that violations of this policy or unlawful use of the computers, wireless laptops, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), the Internet or District networks will result in disciplinary actions.
2. Any user of the network will be held financially responsible for damages to District equipment, systems and software due to deliberate acts of vandalism.
3. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the network and the Internet, in addition to the policies. Loss of access and other disciplinary actions may result from inappropriate use. For example, disciplinary action may be taken for inappropriate language or behavior in using the computers, wireless laptops, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), the District network or online services.
4. Loss of Internet access could be one of the disciplinary actions; however, this policy incorporates all other relevant District policies, such as but not limited to, the student and professional employee discipline, copyright, property, website development, bullying, curriculum, sexual harassment and terroristic threat policies. Violations as described in this policy may be reported to the appropriate legal authorities, such as the Internet service provider, local, state and federal law enforcement.

#### Definitions

**Midd-West School District Network** – All necessary components that effect the Network’s operation, including computers, copper and fiber cabling, wireless communications and links, equipment closets and enclosures, Network electronics, telephone lines, printers and other peripherals, storage media and other computers and/or Networks to which the Midd-West School District Network may be connected, such as the Internet or those of other Institutions.

**E-mail** – Electronic mail. Mail composed and transmitted on a computer system or Network.

**Hardware** – The physical components of a computer system – the computer, plotters, printers, terminals, digitizers, keyboards, mice and so on.

**Internet (Web)** – A Network of servers linked together by a common protocol, allowing access to millions of hypertext resources. It is also known as WWW, W3 And the World Wide Web.

**Software** – Written coded commands that tell a computer what tasks to perform. For example, Word, Photoshop, Excel and Access are software programs.

**User** – Any one person who may have access to the Midd-West School District Network. This may include, but is not limited to, administrators, guests, School Board members, students, support staff and teachers.

### **Internet Safety**

It is the policy of Midd-West School District to: (a) prevent District network access to or transmission of inappropriate material via the Internet, electronic mail or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use or dissemination of student personal information; (d) provide Internet safety education to students and (e) comply with the Federal Communications Commission’s Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Midd-West School District takes reasonable measures to ensure that students do not access material and content that is potentially harmful to minors. As required by CIPA, Midd-West School District utilizes a technology protection measure (“filter”) that blocks access to material that is potentially harmful to minors. The filtering technology blocks Internet content and visual depictions including, but not limited to: pornography, child pornography, sexual acts or conduct and other obscene material that may be deemed harmful to minors.

District administrators, supervisors or other authorized staff may disable technology protection measures for legitimate educational purposes, bona fide research or other lawful purposes. Midd-West School District may override the technology protection measure for a student to access a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked by the technology protection measure.

Midd-West School District staff monitors student use of the Internet, through either direct supervision, or by monitoring Internet use history, to ensure that network services are used within the context of the District’s instructional program, educational goals and to enforce the Internet Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy. Additionally, the District takes reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorized access (“hacking”) to electronic student records and information. These precautions include, but are not limited to: network firewalls, confidential passwords, data encryption, electronic monitoring and physical data security.

Midd-West School District provides instruction to all students on the topics of Internet safety and appropriate online behavior. Internet safety education topics include, but are not limited to: online behavior and ethics, social networking safety, chat room safety, electronic bullying awareness and response and other online privacy and security issues.

Midd-West School District’s network and computing systems are for educational use only. The District makes no assurances of any kind, whether expressed or implied, regarding any Internet, network or electronic communication services. Even with the above provisions, Midd-West School District cannot

guarantee that a student or staff member will not gain access to objectionable or inappropriate Internet material.