

The Internet is a unique opportunity to enhance instructional methods, appeal to different learning styles, and meet the educational goals of the board. Through the Internet, users can observe events as they occur around the world, interact with others on a variety of subjects, and acquire access to current and in-depth information. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Any student use of the Internet must comply with the requirements outlined in this policy.

I. Objective

This policy is designed to cover students' use of the Martin County Schools' computer equipment, local-area and wide-area networks, and Internet access. The goal of the school system in providing this service is to facilitate resource sharing, innovation, and communication that are consistent with the educational objectives of the State of North Carolina and the Martin County Schools. Internet access includes local, national, and international connections to: libraries, companies, agencies and businesses; discussion groups on a variety of subjects; information news services; and electronic mail communication.

Before a student may use the Internet for any purpose, the parent must be made aware of the possibility that the student could obtain access to inappropriate material. The parent and student must sign a consent form acknowledging that the student user is responsible for appropriate use of the Internet and consenting to the school district monitoring the student's e-mail communication and use of the Internet.

The board is aware that there is information on the Internet that is not related to the educational program. The board also is aware that there is information and opportunities to communicate on subjects that are not suitable for school-age children and that many parents would find objectionable. The school district will take reasonable precautions to prevent students from having access to inappropriate materials, such as violence, nudity, obscenity or graphic language which does not serve a legitimate pedagogical concern. The school district will not limit access to the Internet for the purpose of restricting access to political ideas or social perspectives if the action is not rated simply by a school district official's disapproval of the ideas involved. However, the user is ultimately responsible for his or her activity on the Internet.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies as well as regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of those who use it. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources as well as adherence to school and Board of Education policies. If a user violates any of these provisions, his or her privilege to use the Internet will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied. In a case where laws or the Student Code of Conduct are broken, further consequences may follow.

II. Rules for Use

- 1) Internet access at school is intended to be used for class assignments, educational or career-development research, and personal research that does not violate the other provisions of this policy, in accordance with local and state educational objectives. Other uses of school access are to be considered inappropriate, and are not allowed.
- 2) Student use of chat rooms is prohibited without direct faculty supervision, and then it must be directly tied to classroom assignments or curriculum.
- 3) Student-created websites relating to the school curriculum must have a faculty member sponsoring them. The faculty member is responsible for monitoring the content of the site, and helping the student to update the site regularly. Martin County Schools is not responsible for any student-created and student-maintained websites that are not related to the classroom curriculum.
- 4) Users are expected to abide by the common rules of Network etiquette, as follows:
 1. Students should use appropriate language and be polite in communications across the MCS network or Internet.
 2. Students should not disrupt or attempt to disrupt the functioning of the MCS network communications or equipment in any manner, nor should they gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the MCS network or any electronic records maintained by any other organization (hacking).
 3. Students should not reveal last names, ages, telephone numbers, or other personal identifying information about themselves or someone else to another person across the Internet or network.
 4. Students should not use another person's MCS network password or give their password to another student for that person's use.
 5. Students should not access, publish, save, send or display indecent or profane images or text.
 6. Students should not violate copyright laws by copying files, programs, or other materials protected by copyright, or by failing to give credit to Internet sources used in their research.
- 5) The following activities and/or materials are specifically not permitted:
 1. Illegal, threatening, or defamatory activities according to North Carolina General Statutes (including, but not limited to, harassment, threats, cyberstalking, eavesdropping, and the use of misleading information or hate literature).
 2. The viewing, printing or sending of pornographic, obscene, or lewd materials.
 3. Vandalizing or attempting to vandalize hardware or software (including the creation or spread of viruses and hacking).
 4. Spamming (sending junk mail), ~~political lobbying~~, advertising or any commercial uses of the network.
 5. Wasting limited network resources, including excessive use of the MCS network, downloading files, and loading programs or games to the local

workstation or the MCS network without the prior approval of your teacher or administrator.

6. Arranging / agreeing to meet someone in person that you met online.
7. Demonstrating security problems (such as someone else's password, personal information, or access to restricted network software) to others or failure to notify the teacher and/or staff member of the problem.

III. General Principles

- 1) Students and parents should be aware that any files stored in network file directories or on the local hard drive(s) and any Internet activity may be screened, supervised or viewed by school and system staff, and parents will be given access to their child's files on request. Students should not expect any privacy in these files.
- 2) Students must immediately notify the teacher or staff member when they see or receive a message or material that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Failure to immediately notify the teacher will constitute culpability on the student's part for any actions they have taken or take thereafter.
- 3) Martin County Schools does not guarantee the service it is providing, including delays, loss of data or connections, service interruptions, and e-mail deliveries. Martin County Schools does not control the material available on the Internet, and cannot be responsible for inaccurate data or offensive material encountered on the World Wide Web.
- 4) Martin County Schools will cooperate with law enforcement agencies on the investigation of any illegal activities involving internet/network use.

IV. Disciplinary Actions

Internet and/or network use will be taken away if these policies are not followed. Any activities that violate this policy, the Student Code of Conduct, or Martin County Board Of Education policy will make the user subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and will result in termination of their MCS network account.

V. Legal References

Legal Reference: U.S. Const. amend. I; 17 U.S.C. 100 et seq.; Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; G.S. 115C-391, -325(e)

All references to obscene, profane, offensive, or illegal materials or matter are those defined in North Carolina General Statutes 14-190.1, 14-196.3, 14-202.3, 19-1.1, and 19-12.

Cross Reference: Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Copyright Complaint (policy 3230/7330), Standards of Expected Student Behavior (policy 4310), Public Records (policy 5070), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300)

Adopted: February 6, 2006