



Book	NVTHS Policy Manual
Section	5400's Students and Instruction: Internet Access Use Policy
Title	Acceptable Use Policy
Code	5401
Status	Active
Adopted	April 12, 2011

I. Acceptable Use

The Nashoba Valley Technical High School ("District") provides a computer network, including access to the Internet access and staff access to electronic mail, for the purpose of promoting the exchange of information to further education and research consistent with the mission of the district. The Nashoba Valley Technical High School District expects that students and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

The potentially limitless amount of information available on the Internet creates the potential for the posting or retrieval, intentionally or unintentionally, of inappropriate or harmful material. It is the purpose of these guidelines to assist all users of the Nashoba Valley Technical High School computer network to use this resource safely and appropriately. The Nashoba Valley Technical High School computer network is not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services.

Members of the Nashoba Valley Technical High School community are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or school hallway. Communications on the network may reach larger audiences than face-to-face conversations or telephone discussions. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Access to network services will be provided to those who act in a considerate and responsible manner.

Nashoba Valley Technical High School believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and opportunity for collaboration available through the Internet exceed the potential disadvantages. However, the parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, Nashoba Valley Technical High School respects each family's right to decide whether or not their child will have independent access to the Internet at school. Students are given individual access passwords and may have the opportunity to access the Internet and conduct independent self-directed research, both during classroom instruction and outside of classroom instruction, under the supervision of a teacher or other staff member.

For students to be permitted to gain independent access to the Internet or network, they must agree to and abide by the rules set out below. For students under 18 years of age, parents must provide written permission before students will be allowed to gain independent access to the Internet and computer network. If Nashoba Valley Technical High School does not receive a signed user agreement and, if applicable, a parent's signature, independent access to the computer network and Internet will not be granted, but they may still have exposure to the Internet during classroom instruction or library research.

Nashoba Valley Technical High School will make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk that users will encounter objectionable material on the Internet. However, there is no absolute guarantee that this will not happen. Nashoba Valley Technical High School intends to utilize any blocking or filtering safeguards required by law. With these measures, in addition to user education, implementation of this policy and proper supervision, Nashoba Valley Technical High School believes that the Internet can be used safely to enhance the delivery of educational services.

II. Unacceptable Use

A violation of the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or termination of network access privileges (other than directly supervised access during classroom instruction) and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of Nashoba Valley Technical High School and could also result in criminal prosecution where applicable. Nashoba Valley Technical High School will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in any investigation relating to misuse of the Nashoba Valley Technical High School computer network. The following list is not exhaustive but illustrates unacceptable uses of the District's Network:

- a. Cyberbullying, which is the repeated use by one or more students of an electronic expression (including the transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, the electronic mail, the Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications, creation of Web pages or blogs in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, or the distribution of communications to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons), alone or in combination with any written or verbal expressions or physical acts or gestures, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 370.
 - b. Sending messages or posting information that would likely result in the loss of a recipient's work or system.
 - c. Sending "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals, subscribing to "listserves" or "newsgroups" without prior permission, or using the internet access for any other personal use, without prior permission.
 - d. Using the network in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material and spreading of computer viruses.
 - e. Accessing, transmitting or posting materials without redeeming educational value and/or materials considered antisocial, defamatory, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, bullying, illegal according to federal, state or local laws (including, but not limited to gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol or participating in criminal gang activity), or attempting to do any of the above.
 - f. Accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet.
 - g. Disclosing, using or disseminating any personal identifying information about self or others, including personal address or telephone number.
 - h. Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.
 - a. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment, including attempts to override, or to encourage others to override any firewalls and/or Internet filtering software established on the network.
 - j. Attempting to harm, modify or destroy data of another user.
 - k. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever which would in any way subject the user or Nashoba Valley Technical High School to any civil or criminal action.
 - ax. Discussing highly sensitive or confidential school department information in electronic communications.
 - all. Using the Nashoba Valley Technical High School technology network to buy, sell or advertise anything.
 - n. Using social networking sites, discussion groups, chat rooms, instant messaging, or other forms of online conversation unless authorized in advance by the teacher and directly tied to a school assignment or classroom project.
 - o. Using the Nashoba Valley Technical High School technology network for gambling, political campaigning or recreational purposes or activities relating to personal hobbies.
 - p. Failing to log off the computer network at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of system administrators.
 - q. Using the Internet service to receive or send information relating to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry;
 - r. Vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system or destroying data by failing to take precautions to avoid spreading computer viruses or by any other means; accessing misappropriating, or misusing the files, data, or information that belongs to others.
 - s. Copying or downloading of copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the Director of Technology for the District.
 - t. Plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited as to sources;
 - u. Using the Network service for commercial, religious, political, or other private purposes.
- III. Nashoba Valley Technical High School assumes no responsibility for:
- a. any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs.
 - b. any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services.
 - c. any cost, liability or damages caused by a user's violation of these guidelines.
 - d. any information or materials that are transferred through the network.

IV. Nashoba Valley Technical High School makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. Nashoba Valley Technical High School shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the network.

V. All messages and information created, sent or retrieved on the network are the property of Nashoba Valley Technical High School. Electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students and staff, including accessing Internet pages, should not be considered confidential. Nashoba Valley Technical High School reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, including Internet pages accessed, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the ordinary course of its business for purposes including, but not limited to, ensuring proper use of resources, investigating allegations of improper use and conducting routine network maintenance. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

VI. Any users caught illegally obtaining software or transferring such software through the network, and any user accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts suspended. In such event, the user's network access will be limited to directly supervised use during classroom instruction. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

VII. If a user finds materials that are inappropriate while using the Nashoba Valley Technical High School technology network, s/he shall refrain from downloading this material and shall not identify or share the material. It should be understood that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment.

VIII. Should a user, while using the Nashoba Valley Technical High School technology network, encounter any material that s/he feels may constitute a threat against the safety of fellow students, staff members or the property of Nashoba Valley Technical High School, that user is obligated to report his/her discovery of such material to a teacher or to the Principal.

IX. Cyberbullying, that either (a) is committed through the use of technology or devices that are owned, leased or used by the school district or (b)(i) is committed using technology or devices not owned, leased or used by the school, and (ii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of the school, should be reported by following the school district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and Procedures. See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 370.

X. Nashoba Valley Technical High School's administration reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

XI. Nashoba Valley Technical High School reserves the right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the district, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of electronic resources.

XII. Safety Issues

Filtering – To the extent possible, the District shall implement technology protection measures to comply with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act, including the use of a filter to protect against access to material that is harmful to minors (as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act).

The importance of student supervision is emphasized by Nashoba Valley Technical School District. Technology protection measures will not block 100 percent of the inappropriate material, signifying the importance of supervision. It is the expectation that all Nashoba Valley Technical School District staff will be responsible for monitoring and supervising all students using information technology resources, including the Internet.

Education – Information about appropriate use of technology and information included in this policy shall be made available to all users and reviewed with students and staff at least once per school year. All students participate in Internet safety education through the Library orientation. All staff members participate in Internet safety education through staff development. Students, parents and instructors are encouraged to view the I-Safe website: <http://www.i-safe.org/> for Internet safety information.

Social Networking Sites - Certain Web 2.0 services, such as Moodle, wikis, podcasts, RSS feeds, blogs, myspace, and facebook may not be used without pre-approval of the Director of Technology or other administrator, followed by proper online safety training authorized by the District. Users must comply with this policy as well as any other relevant policies during such use. Staff are cautioned to never communicate with current or potential students on social networking sites or by other electronic means. Staff utilizing social networking sites are urged to use extreme caution, especially when posting personal information that may be accessible for many years. Publicly posting any information that may result in a disruption of normal school operations is prohibited.