

## **New Salem/Wendell School District Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy**

### **Introduction**

The computer network resources at the Swift River School are provided by and in consonance with the mission of the New Salem/Wendell School District which serves to:

- Improve education for all students through access to unique resources and partnerships;
- Improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration and distribution of successful education practices, methods and materials.

In addition, we seek to ensure a healthy and appropriate use of Internet resources by making provisions for:

- Prevention of access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Prevention of unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities;
- Prevention of unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors, and
- The design of measures to restrict minors’ access to harmful materials.

Our electronic resources—including, but not limited to, computers and Internet access—allow users access to local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy, and are intended solely for educational purposes. Every user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our school communities and on the Internet. Account holders are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner, in accordance with both school and district policies, rules, regulations and guidelines and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States.

The potential exists, outside the school/district network, for users to access inappropriate material. A user may intentionally or innocently access material inconsistent with our educational purpose. While violations of school/district policy are cause for concern, we maintain the educational advantages of using the web outweigh the disadvantages. It is the burden of parents and guardians to establish standards of use of electronic media consistent with school/district policy and to ensure that users comply with established policy. We respect each family’s decision whether their child should or should not have access to the Internet. Students will be given an account on the network and access to the Internet unless a parent or legal guardian submits a signed Refusal Form.

The following explains our policies for acceptable use of the Swift River School computer network. Use of our computer network and the Internet are revocable privileges dependent upon compliance with school/district policy. A user’s failure to comply with policy shall result in limited network/Internet access, suspension of access, and/or other disciplinary action.

## **I. General provisions**

The Swift River School has established certain protocols to ensure the safety of our school community, the security of computer networks, and compliance with applicable law. All users should be aware of the following standard practices:

### **A. Network and Internet monitoring**

Our school may have software and systems in place that monitor and record all Internet usage. Given reasonable cause, we may intermittently monitor Internet traffic and other usage of electronic resources, for instance, by tracking destination URLs of individual users. Users should have no expectation of privacy when browsing the web, sending or receiving e-mail, or using other electronic resources.

### **B. Filtering**

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by the U.S. Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), our school district shall employ filtering software to block access to inappropriate content on all computers with Internet access. Our school district certifies that a policy of Internet safety and technology protection measures shall be enforced. Users are restricted from accessing visual depictions of subject matter that is obscene, pornographic, child pornographic or harmful to minors. In compliance with CIPA our school district shall, in furtherance of this policy of Internet safety, monitor the online activities of minors.

Users should be aware that filtering software will not block ALL inappropriate web sites. Users shall report all inappropriate sites not blocked by filters to a technology administrator for appropriate action. Filtering software may be disabled for users 18 and over by a technology administrator for legitimate research purposes.

Our school district can not be held responsible for misuse of material downloaded from any online service, or for inappropriate or sexually explicit material being obtained through the network.

## **II. User-specific provisions**

### **A. All users**

Students, staff and faculty shall not:

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic material; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs, or racial epithets; or discriminates on the basis of gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, handicap or age.
3. Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system performance.
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.

6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user's data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
8. Download, install, load or use programs without written permission of a technology administrator.
9. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul or abusive language.
11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images or language.
12. Forward chain letters.
13. Forward e-mail messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community (see number 5 below).
14. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
15. Engage in the practice of "hacking" or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity with using the network.

Students, staff and faculty must:

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, use of appropriate language.
3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended and reporting all unauthorized use of one's account to a technology administrator.
4. Avoid bulk e-mailing
5. Forward all e-mails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to a technology administrator for appropriate distribution to the entire school community.
6. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect

## **B. Students**

Students may access the Internet only with adult supervision, and must notify a teacher or technology administrator immediately if they come across inappropriate content. In addition, students may not use the Internet to give out personal information (such as a home address, telephone number, or picture) about themselves or other students. Student use of electronic resources is restricted to teacher-approved projects and research.

## **III. E-mail**

School and district resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes. Incidental and occasional personal use of electronic mail may occur when such use does not generate a direct cost for the district, but such messages will be treated no differently from other messages on the network. Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
2. Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct school/district business.
3. Constructing electronic communications to they appear to be from someone else.

4. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial school/district business purpose.

#### **IV. Posting of Student Photos and Work on the School Web Site**

Parent Permission is required before any student's photo, art work, writing, or other project, may be posted on the Swift River School web site, a part of the Internet. Student work will appear with no reference to the student's last name, home address or telephone number.

#### **V: Cyberbullying**

The use of electronic mobile computer devices, as well as traditional computers, for the purpose of cyberbullying is strictly prohibited both on and off school grounds.

Cyberbullying is defined by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 (An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools) is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include , but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creating of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

First Vote: October 4, 2001

Second Vote: November 1, 2001

Amended: November 4, 2010