

### Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety (Acceptable Use Policy)

#### Introduction

The Board is pleased to offer students access to the district's computers and computer networks, including access to electronic mail (e-mail) and the Internet, as well as electronic devices, (all of which will be referred to collectively as "computer systems".) Access to the school's computer systems will enable students to explore libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with others. Such access is provided solely for education-related purposes. Use of the district's computer systems will be allowed only for students who act in a considerate and responsible manner in using such systems.

The Board and the Administration believe in the educational value of such computer systems and recognize their potential to support our curriculum by expanding resources available for staff and student use. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

These computer systems are expensive to purchase, install and maintain. As the property of the district these computer systems must be carefully handled and their integrity preserved for the benefit of all. Therefore, *access to the computer systems is a privilege, and not a right*. Students will be required to adhere to a set of policies and procedures, as set forth in detail below. Violations may lead to withdrawal of the access privilege and/or disciplinary measures in accordance with the Board's student discipline policy.

#### Definitions

**Obscene** – means any material or performance if, (a) taken as a whole, it predominantly appeals to the prurient interest, (b) it depicts or describes in a patently offensive way a prohibited sex act and (c) taken as a whole, does not have serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. For the purposes of this section, "prohibited sex act" means erotic fondling, nude performance, sexual excitement, sado-masochistic abuse, masturbation or sexual intercourse.

**Child pornography** – means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, cartoon, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where,

- a. the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- b. such visual depiction is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- c. such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

## Regulation 5220 (b)

### Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety (continued) (Acceptable Use Policy)

**Harmful to minors** – any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- a. taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- b. depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- c. taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

### Monitoring

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer systems just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the computer systems are often public in nature and general school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with district standards and will act in a responsible and legal manner, at all times in accordance with district standards, as well as with state and federal laws.

It is important that students and parents understand that the district, *as the owner of the computer systems, reserves the right to monitor and review* the use of these computer systems. The district intends to monitor and review in a limited fashion, but will do so as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes.

As part of the monitoring and reviewing process, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. *The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for e-mail, can be bypassed for these purposes.* The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitoring and reviewing process also includes, but is not limited to; oversight of Internet site access, the right to review emails sent and received, the right to track students' access to blogs, electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms, and the right to review a student's document downloading and printing.

**Therefore, all users are advised that *they shall not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these computer systems.***

### Student Conduct

Students are permitted to use the district's computer systems for legitimate educational purposes. Personal use of district computer systems is expressly prohibited. Conduct which constitutes inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Sending any form of harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime);
- Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to computer systems;

## Regulation 5220 (c)

### Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety (continued) (Acceptable Use Policy)

- Damaging computers, computer files, computer systems or computer networks;
- Downloading or modifying computer software of the district in violation of the district's licensure agreement(s) and/or without authorization from a teacher or administrator;
- Using another person's password under any circumstances;
- Trespassing in or tampering with any other person's folders, work or files;
- Sending any message that breaches the district's confidentiality requirements, or the confidentiality of students;
- Sending any copyrighted material over the system;
- Using computer systems for any personal purpose, or in a manner that interferes with the district's educational programs;
- Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, contains child pornography, or is harmful to minors, as defined above;
- Transmitting or receiving e-mail communications or accessing information on the Internet for non-educational purposes;
- Cyberbullying, or any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications;
- Accessing or attempting to access social networking sites without a legitimate educational purpose.

In addition, as noted above, if a particular behavior or activity is generally prohibited by law, by Board policy or by school rules or regulations, use of these computer systems for the purpose of carrying out such behavior or activity is also prohibited.

*Misuse of the computer systems, or violations of these policies and regulations, may result in loss of access to such computer systems as well as other disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, depending on the specific conduct.*

Anyone who is aware of problems with, or misuse of these computer systems, or has a question regarding the proper use of these computer systems, should report this to his or her teacher or principal immediately. Most importantly, the Board and the Administration urge *any* student who receives *any* harassing, threatening, intimidating or other improper message through the computer system to report this immediately. It is the Board's policy that no student should be required to tolerate such treatment, regardless of the identity of the sender of the message. *Please report these events!* Board of Education Policy 5020 allows for reporting of suspected bullying behaviors. The "Report of Suspected Bullying Behaviors" form (5020 Form #1) should be completed and given to a building administrator.

## Regulation 5220 (d)

### Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety (continued) (Acceptable Use Policy)

#### Internet Safety

The Administration will take measures: to assure the safety and security of students when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; to prohibit unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online; to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students; to educate minor students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response; and to restrict students' access to online materials harmful to minors, including obscene materials and child pornography.

#### Student Use Agreement

Before being allowed to use the district's computer systems, students and/or their parents/guardians must sign a computer system use agreement, stating that they have read and understood the district's policies and regulations regarding the use of its computer systems.

#### Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182b; 53a-183; 53a-250 (computer-related offenses)

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-193 (definition of obscene)

18 U.S.C. § 2256 (definition of child pornography)

Electronic Communication Privacy Act of 1986, Public Law 99-508 codified at 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

Children's Internet Protection Act, Pub. Law 106-554, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 6777

Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Pub. Law 110-385, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(5)(B)(iii)

Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973) (definition of obscene)

Regulation issued: June 27, 2013  
Regulation revised: April 27, 2017  
Regulation revised: February 27, 2020

WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Waterford, Connecticut

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The Waterford Public School District is very pleased to inform you that we have the ability to enrich your child's education through the use of a software application called Google Apps for Education. The District's goal in providing this application is to enhance its educational program and to promote educational excellence. The Internet's ability to connect multiple computer networks around the world opens the door to a new and exciting classroom experience. Students will be given access to millions of resources, databases and services.

As part of Google Apps for Education, an email account will be created for each student. Email is one communication tool that allows students to "use digital media to work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others." (ISTE Student NETS). Google Apps for Education and the student email that accompanies each account is different from Google Mail (Gmail) Accounts because they are managed by the district, do not include any advertising and use filtering and other content controls. However, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requires parental permission for websites collecting personally identifiable information from children under age 13. For more information on COPPA compliance, see the FTC's website at [www.ftc.gov/coppa](http://www.ftc.gov/coppa). Limited personally identifiable information will be shared through the Google Apps for Education Application. For example, email addresses will consist of a student's school network login name followed by @my.waterfordschools.org . While students should only use their email accounts for authorized purposes, an email address will enable them to create accounts on non-school owned websites, whether authorized by school personnel or not.

We realize that a student's digital footprint is a concern for many parents. The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance to parents and students in the use of Google Apps for Education in order to maximize the potential benefit, and provide safety in the use of technology to insure the security of confidential information. Students' school issued Google Apps for Education accounts are deactivated within 48 hours of any child leaving the school system. However, it is the student's responsibility to be mindful of the information that they are entering on any third party website and to maintain and deactivate any account they create on these sites.

Communication tools within Google Apps for Education offer a number of advantages for students including: allowing students to communicate with their teachers and other students, allowing students to engage in collaborative writing and group discussions about their class work, and permitting students to contribute to project teams to produce original works and solve problems. In addition to being able to communicate within the Waterford Public Schools network, Google Apps for Education brings a global learning environment to our students, giving them the opportunity to develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging and collaborating with learners from different nations. These are critical learning opportunities and we will ensure that our students are educated to become leaders in digital citizenship to set them on the path to lifelong learning.

Our staff exercises professional judgment in selecting informational resources on the Internet. We ask that you support our expectation that students act in a respectful, responsible and ethical manner when utilizing their school issued email account as they do in any other school related activity. Student issued email accounts are a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate behavior. All users assume responsibility for understanding relevant Board policies and guidelines as a condition of using this application.

Waterford Public Schools supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to authorize their child's use of Google Apps for Education. Access to Google Apps for Education, email, and other third party educational websites will be permitted for students in grades K-8 only upon submission of a signed parent/guardian authorization form (attached). To access Waterford Public Schools Google Apps for Education please visit <https://sso.my.waterfordschools.org> and ask your child to give you a tour. Parents will not have school issued accounts.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Assistant Superintendent of Schools

**Google Apps for Education Authorization Form**

In order to create a Google Apps for Education Account and email address for children in grades K-8 , parental permission is required. Please fill out the information below, sign and return to the school if you consent to Waterford Public schools creating such an account for your child.

I \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Waterford Public Schools to Activate Google Apps for Education and email for my child, \_\_\_\_\_. I realize that the creation of this account enables the school and/or my child to create accounts on non-school owned websites.

Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Grades 3 through 12)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_