

Appendix G: Internet Use Policy and Procedures

STUDENT ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES - POLICY

The Board recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technologies shift the ways that information may be accessed, communicated and transferred by members of society, those changes may also alter instruction and student learning. The Board generally supports access by students to such information resources along with the development by staff of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources. In a free and democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship.

Telecommunications, electronic information sources and networked services significantly alter the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, instructional and library media materials could usually be screened—prior to use—by committees of educators and community members intent on subjecting all such materials to reasonable selection criteria. Board Policy 2311 requires that all such materials be consistent with district-adopted guides, supporting and enriching the curriculum while taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students. Telecommunications, because they may lead to any publicly available fileserver in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees during an Age of Information. The Board expects that staff will blend thoughtful use of such information throughout the curriculum and that the staff will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources. Staff will consult the guidelines for instructional materials contained in Board Policy 2311 and will honor the goals for selection of instructional materials contained therein.

Filtering software is now in use on all computers with access to the Internet. This blocks or filters access to visual depictions that are obscene, contain child pornography, or are harmful to minors. Educational staff will, to the best of their ability, monitor minors' use of the Internet in school, and will take reasonable measures to prevent access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet and World Wide Web, and restrict their access to materials harmful to minors.

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply (see Board Policy 3200). The network is provided for students to conduct research, complete assignments, and communicate with others. Access to network services will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner.

Personal information such as complete names, addresses, telephone numbers and identifiable photos should remain confidential when communicating on the system. No user may disclose, use, or disseminate personal identification information regarding minors without authorization. Students encountering information or messages they deem dangerous or inappropriate on the web or when using electronic mail or direct communications should notify their teacher or other adult staff. Chat rooms and direct electronic communications (Instant Message services) are not permitted on school networks unless expressly authorized.

Independent student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission forms and agreement forms by parents of minor students (under 18 years of age) and by students themselves. Regional networks such as

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WEDNET require agreement by users to acceptable use policies outlining standards for behavior and communication.

Use of the network resources must be in support of educational goals. The district reserves the right to prioritize use and access to the system. No use of the system shall serve to disrupt the use of the system by others; system components including hardware or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way. Malicious use of the system to develop programs or institute practices that harass other users or gain unauthorized access to any entity on the system and/or damage the components of an entity on the network is prohibited. Users are responsible for the appropriateness of the material they transmit over the system. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other antisocial behaviors are expressly prohibited. Such acts constitute a violation of Policy 3200 and will lead to discipline as provided therein.

Access to telecommunications will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and electronic resources while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The Board believes that the benefits to students from access in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, 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, Creston Public Schools support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent access.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to prepare appropriate procedures for implementing this policy and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on instruction and student achievement.

STUDENT ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES – PROCEDURES

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

In order to match electronic resources as closely as possible to the approved District curriculum, District personnel will continue to review and evaluate resources in order to organize and create web pages and menus of materials which comply with Board guidelines listed in Board Policy 2311 governing the selection of instructional materials. In this manner, staff will provide developmentally appropriate guidance to students as they make use of telecommunications and electronic information resources to conduct research and other studies related to the district curriculum. All students will be informed by staff of their rights and responsibilities as users of the District network prior to gaining access to that network, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.

All students and their parents will be required to review and agree to the rules governing access to Internet resources. The review will be required:

- for all first time users (typically the beginning of grade 3), and
- all students at the beginning of grade 6 and 9.

Individual buildings may, at their discretion, require more frequent review.

As much as possible, access to District information resources will be designed in ways which point students to those which have been reviewed and evaluated prior to use. While students may be able to move beyond those resources to others which have not been evaluated by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to the

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learning objectives. Filtering software is in use to block access to visual depictions that are obscene, contain child pornography, or are harmful to minors. However, no filtering system is capable of blocking 100% of the inappropriate material available on the Internet. Students may pursue electronic research independent of staff supervision only if they have been granted parental permission and have submitted all required forms. Permission is not transferable and may not be shared

INTERNET RULES

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.

The network is provided for students to conduct research, complete assignments, and communicate with others. Independent access to network services is provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required for minors. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Individual users of the district computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. It is presumed that users will comply with District standards and will honor the agreements they have signed.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on District servers will be always be private.

During school, teachers of younger students will guide them toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for such guidance as they must also exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media.

The following are not permitted:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Giving personal information when using the system, such as complete name, address, phone number and identifiable photo without permission from teacher and parent or guardian.
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords
- Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud.

SANCTIONS

- Violations may result in a loss of access. The range of sanctions is identified in Policy 3200.
- Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in line with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
- When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

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STAFF ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES - POLICY

With the spread of telecommunications throughout the modern work place, the Board recognizes that employees will shift the ways they share ideas, transmit information, and contact others. As staff members are connected to the global community, their use of new tools and systems brings new responsibilities as well as opportunities.

The Board expects that all employees will use electronic mail and telecommunications tools and apply them daily in appropriate ways to the performance of tasks associated with their positions and assignments. Toward that end, the Board directs the Superintendent to provide staff with training in the proper and effective use of telecommunications and electronic mail.

Communication over networks should not be considered private. Network supervision and maintenance may require review and inspection of directories or messages. Messages may sometimes be diverted accidentally to a destination other than the one intended. Privacy in these communications is not guaranteed. The district reserves the right to access stored records in cases where there is reasonable cause to expect wrong-doing or misuse of the system. Courts have ruled that old messages may be subpoenaed, and network supervisors may examine communications in order to ascertain compliance with network guidelines for acceptable use.

The Board directs the Superintendent to specify those behaviors which are permitted and those which are not permitted, as well as appropriate procedures to guide employee use. In general, employees are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with state laws governing the behavior of school employees and with federal laws governing copyrights. Electronic mail and telecommunications are not to be utilized to share confidential information about students or other employees. No user may disclose, use, or disseminate personal identification information regarding minors without authorization.

The Board encourages staff to make use of telecommunications to explore educational topics, conduct research, and contact others in the educational world. The Board anticipates that the new systems will expedite the sharing of effective practices and lessons across the district and will help staff stay on the leading edge of practice by forming partnerships with others across the nation and around the world.

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Staff will employ electronic mail on a daily basis at work as a primary tool for communications. The district may rely upon this medium to communicate information, and all staff will be responsible for checking and reading messages daily.

The network is provided for staff and students to conduct research, complete assignments, and communicate with others. Communications over the network are often public in nature therefore general rules and standards for professional behavior and communications will apply. Electronic mail and telecommunications are not to be utilized by employees to share confidential information about students or other employees because messages are not entirely secure.

Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that staff members are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on district servers will be private.

The following behaviors are not permitted on district networks:

- Sharing confidential information on students or employees
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Engaging in practices that threaten the network (e.g., loading files that may introduce a virus)
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords
- Trespassing in others' folders, documents, or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud
- Violating regulations prescribed by the network provider
- Promoting, supporting or celebrating religion or religious institutions
- Conducting union or employee association business, except as may be agreed to in writing between the union/employee association and the District, and subject to the usage guidelines and conditions contained in this policy.

The Network Supervisor will report inappropriate behaviors to the employee's supervisor who will take appropriate disciplinary action. Any other reports of inappropriate behavior, violations, or complaints will be routed to the employee's supervisor for appropriate action. Violations may result in a loss of access and / or disciplinary action. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Each employee will be given copies of this policy and procedures and will sign an acceptable use agreement before establishing an account or continuing their use. The District reserves the right to amend its policies and procedures regarding Staff Access to Networked Information Services and acceptable use agreements.