

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES & THE INTERNET**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Townshend School District to use electronic resources including the Internet to support and enrich the curriculum. The Board believes that the benefit to students from access to electronic information resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceed the disadvantages.

### **General Information**

The Board supports access to rich information resources by students and staff as well as the development of staff instructional skills to analyze, evaluate and incorporate electronic resources within the curriculum. This policy complies with the statutory requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and promotes the safe, ethical, responsible, and legal use of District electronic resources including the Internet to support the effective use of these resources for educational purposes. CIPA requires the installation and use of filtering software or services on all computers with access to the Internet to prevent access to visual depictions of obscenity, child pornography or other materials harmful to minors.

Access to District electronic resources including the Internet will be available to students and staff who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and abide by the requirements of this policy.

Violation of this policy and the procedures developed in accordance with this policy may result in disciplinary action or referral to local, state or federal law enforcement officials.

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

The Superintendent or designee will coordinate and oversee the use of District electronic resources including the Internet. The Principal or designee will serve as the building-level coordinator for use of the electronic resources including the Internet and will develop building-level procedures necessary to implement this policy. The procedures will include provision for educators to receive proper training, guidelines for the supervision of students using the system, monitoring the use of the system, and overseeing management of the "acceptable use procedures" agreement process.

The District will stipulate in any agreement or contract that Internet service providers will not collect, analyze, and/or sell individual or anonymous student use data for the purpose of commercial advertising and marketing research activities. The collection and analysis of student use data strictly for the purpose of educational evaluation is acceptable, provided that student confidentiality standards are maintained.

The Principal or designee will conduct an annual analysis of the effectiveness of the selected filtering product or service and make recommendations to the Superintendent and Board regarding current and future use of the product or service.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

School staff members are responsible for assuring that students are instructed and supervised in a manner that is appropriate to the age of the students and circumstances regarding the safe, ethical, legal, and responsible use of electronic resources including the Internet. The Principal or designee will develop and disseminate staff supervision guidelines for their respective schools.

Student electronic records are confidential and should be treated like all other student records.

No identified student photos shall be posted on the Internet without the specific permission of a parent or guardian.

### **User Responsibilities**

During school hours, users may access electronic resources including the Internet for educational purposes only. The term "educational purpose" includes use of the system for classroom activities, which may involve e-mail communication, career development, and curriculum driven research.

The District may provide e-mail access for students and staff. Students and staff may use real-time electronic communication, such as chat or instant messaging only for specifically organized educational activities.

Students will not post or have posted personal contact information about themselves or other people and agree to follow communication safety requirements outlined in administrative procedures when using electronic communications including the Internet.

Staff may access the District's electronic resources for limited personal use. Limited personal use of the District's electronic resources including the Internet shall be allowed if permission is granted in advance, and the use:

- imposes no tangible cost to the District;
- does not unduly burden the District's electronic resources;
- occurs during non-instructional time and does not impede other student or staff access for educational purposes; and
- does not violate this policy.

Users will respect the rights of copyright owners and will not plagiarize works they find on the District electronic network including the Internet by presenting them as their own.

Users should not expect that any files and records of their online activity created on the District's system are private. Users will be fully and regularly informed about the District's supervision and monitoring activities and the limitations on their privacy.

Students and staff may not access materials for any purpose that the District deems to be potentially harmful, inappropriate, illegal, and non-educational. This includes materials that are obscene or child pornography.

### **Parental Notification and Responsibility**

Each school will provide written (annually) notice to parents/guardians about student use of District electronic resources including the Internet, the policies and procedures governing their use, and the limitation of liability of the District. Parents/guardians must sign an agreement to allow their child(ren) (all students 18 years of age or older must sign their own agreement) to access District electronic resources including the Internet and return this agreement to the school before access will be granted.

### **Limitation/Disclaimer of Liability**

The District is not liable for unacceptable use or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The District is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the District's electronic resources network including the Internet.

The District is not responsible for any damage experienced, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on the electronic resources system including the Internet, or for financial obligations arising through their unauthorized use.

### **Due Process**

In the event there is an allegation that a user has violated this policy, a student will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the student disciplinary policy. Staff member infractions will be dealt with in accordance with contractual agreements.

Notice of violations of this policy shall be forwarded to the Principal to evaluate compliance with this policy and the appropriate implementation procedures.

The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to illegal activities conducted through the use of the District's electronic resources including the Internet.

Date Warned:  
5/26/08

Date Adopted:  
6/9/08

Legal Reference(s): 15 U.S.C. §6501 (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)  
17 U.S.C. §§101-120 (Federal Copyright Act of 1976 as amended)  
18 U.S.C. §2510 (*Electronic Communications Privacy*)

*Act)*

*18 U.S.C. §2251 (Federal Child Pornography Law)*

*47 U.S.C. §230 (Computer Decency Act)*

*13 V.S.A. §§2802 et seq. (Obscenity, minors)*

*Cross Reference: Student Conduct and Discipline (F1)*

*Copyrights (G2)*

*Selection of Instructional Materials (G5)*

*Complaints About Instructional Materials (G6)*