

# **ALVORD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

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Alvord Independent School District (District) offers Internet access for students and teachers primarily for educational purposes that allow access to expert knowledge transmitted through a variety of media. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) of the district for using the AISD Electronic Communication System (ECS or system). The District will provide training in proper use of the ECS which will emphasize the ethical and safe use of the Internet. The District will provide all users with copies of this policy through the student handbook and District's website.

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Access to the District's Electronic Communications System shall be made available to students and employees in accordance with administrative regulations and all users are subject to the policies stated within this document. Access to the District's ECS is a privilege not a right. There can be no guarantee of privacy and some sites may contain information that is inaccurate or offensive to some users. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the ECS and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines. Noncompliance with applicable regulations will result in disciplinary action consistent with District policies and regulations. Violations of law may result in the matter being turned over to the authorities and criminal prosecutions followed as well as disciplinary action by the District.

The Superintendent or designee will oversee the District's Electronic Communication System. Any violation of the purpose and goal of the District's network is considered inappropriate use. The system's administrators with review by the Superintendent, as needed, will deem what is inappropriate use of the ECS and their decision is final. Additionally, the system administrators may close an account at any time.

Parents of all minor students will have the opportunity to restrict access of their child's access to the Internet or the posting of their images. Failure to actively restrict access will be considered acceptance of ECS usage and consent to post their images.

### **MONITORED USE**

Electronic mail transmissions, Internet browsing and all other use of the ECS by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use of the District's system for educational or administrative purposes.

### **FILTERING**

The District will maintain appropriate technology for filtering Internet sites containing material considered inappropriate or harmful to minors in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Internet access will be filtered to minors and adults as appropriate on computers with Internet access provided by the school.

System users and parents of students with access to the District's ECS should be aware that despite the District's use of technology protection measures, the Internet is a global network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material. It should also be understood that material objectionable to some individuals may not be objectionable to others and the final determination if necessary will be made by the superintendent and district administration.

### **SYSTEM ACCESS**

- Access to the District's Electronic Communications System is a privilege, not a right.
- All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines.
- Non-compliance with applicable regulations will result in disciplinary action consistent with District policies and regulations.
- Violations of law may result in criminal prosecutions as well as disciplinary action by the District.
- Access to the District's Electronic Communications Systems will be governed as follows:
  1. As appropriate and with the approval of the immediate supervisor, district employees will be granted access to the District's system.
  2. Students in grades PK through 12 will be granted access to the District's system by their teachers, as appropriate.

3. Students in grades 2 through 12 will be assigned individual accounts as deemed necessary by the technology director or campus designee.
4. Any system user identified as a security risk or having violated the District and/or campus computer use guidelines may be denied access to the District's system.

## **SCHOOL CONTROL**

- The superintendent and technology director will oversee the District's Electronic Communication System.
- The principal or designee of each campus that affords students telecommunication network access shall cause records to be maintained that include:
  1. A yearly acknowledgement of technology policies signed by a parent or other responsible adult for each student who is afforded telecommunication access; all relevant passwords.
  2. A denial of permission for Internet access should parents decline the student's access to such.
  3. Codes, account numbers, etc., provided to such students in connection with telecommunication access.
- The principal or designee is authorized to monitor or examine all system activities deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of the system.
- The district reserves the right to search the activities on the computer or device of any user of district owned computers or devices when reasonable suspicion dictates the need to do so.

## **DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY**

The technology director or designee for the District's ECS will:

- Be responsible for disseminating and enforcing applicable District Acceptable Use Policies.
- Ensure that all users of the District's system complete and sign an agreement to abide by District policies and administrative regulations regarding such use.
- Ensure that employees supervising students who use the District's ECS provide instruction emphasizing the appropriate use of this resource.
- Ensure that all software loaded on computers is consistent with District standards and needs and is properly licensed.
- Be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions and Internet browsing as deemed necessary to ensure proper use of the system.
- Be authorized to maintain a retention schedule for email messages as required by law and to monitor media posting sites utilized by district employees or students as part of their educational experience. Any inappropriate postings will be removed.
- Set limits, if necessary for data storage within the District's system.

## **SUPERVISING TEACHER**

The supervising teacher will have the following responsibilities regarding student usage of the District's ECS:

- Ensure that no student whose parent or responsible adult has denied permission to the Internet is allowed on the District's system. Alternative assignments must be provided for these students.
- Ensure that all students have a properly signed Acceptable Use Form and are aware of the District policy regarding the proper use of the District's Electronic Communication System.
- Provide training if needed to ensure students understand proper uses of the District's ECS and Internet.
- Monitor all students with the expectations that they abide by the District's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Do not leave students alone on computers or send them to classrooms where no supervision is present.
- The supervising teacher will not be responsible or liable for any student misuse by the student of the District's electronic network if said student has not followed the rules established in the District's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Teachers may have classes and/or activities that give students the opportunity to have pictures, announcements and /or examples of student work published on the District's Website. Teachers may publish student images but are responsible for ensuring no images are published in which permission has been denied.

The supervising teacher will not be responsible for any student's misuse of the Districts electronic network if said student has not followed the rules established in the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF DISTRICT'S ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

The following standards will apply to all users of the District's Electronic Communications Systems:

- The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use.
- System users may not use system accounts of another person without written permission from the campus administrator or technology director or their designee, as appropriate.
- The ECS may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, for the purpose of profit, or any other activity prohibited by District policy or guidelines.
- Students may not distribute any home address, phone number, or personal information about themselves or others by means of the ECS.
- System users must purge electronic mail in accordance with established retention guidelines.
- No user will place any copyrighted software or data on any system connected to the District's ECS without written permission from the holder of the copyright.
- No user will plagiarize information received in any form.
- No user will share his/her password with anyone else.
- No user may attempt to circumvent the District's internet filtering process.
- No user may knowingly bring prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment.
- System users may not participate in unlawful online conduct such as but not limited to piracy, and copyright infringement, publishing defamatory information or committing fraud.
- No user may disrupt or interfere with other users, services or the District's technology network, or resources by but not limited to distributing viruses or spam, phishing, attempting to gain unauthorized access (hacking, stealing passwords) to network resources, the distribution of large quantities of information or data that overwhelms the system or any other form of electronic threat.
- System users may not send or post messages on the District's ECS that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, bullying, hate-based, or illegal.
- System users may not purposefully access materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, bullying, racially unacceptable, or illegal unless it is in the framework of an approved assignment (exception – assignments that are illegal cannot be made).
- Users of the District's ECS are prohibited from sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails or other material of a sexual or socially unacceptable nature in electronic or any other form on a cell phone or other electronic device.
- System users may not spoof or pretend to be some else while emailing, posting messages, or creating accounts (e.g. text, images, audio or video).
- System users may not waste District resources related to the ECS.
- Computer games or simulation games are allowed when they are used to enhance current classroom curriculum or for student rewards as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher and/or the district administration.

Additional acceptable use guidelines may be developed by individual campus or department entities, as may be necessary.

### **LIMITED PERSONAL USE**

- Limited personal use of the ECS by an employee shall be permitted if the use:
  - Imposes no tangible cost to the District.;
  - Does not unduly burden District computers or network resources;
  - Is not used for commercial or political purposes;
  - Has no adverse effect on the employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance as determined by District administration.

### **NETWORK ETIQUETTE**

All users will follow the guidelines of network etiquette which includes but is not limited to:

- Using polite responses and appropriate language
- Do not use profanity, vulgarities, ethnic or racial slurs, inflammatory language or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators.
- Transmitting obscene or sexually oriented messages, pictures or videos is prohibited.

- System users should be mindful that use of school related electronic resources to send mail or post messages might cause some recipients or other readers to assume they represent the District or school, whether or not that was the intention of the user.

### **VANDALISM**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy District equipment or data or the data of another user of the District's ECS or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of District policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, stealing, intentional breaking, and the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

Vandalism as defined above may result in the cancellation of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, as well as other appropriate consequences.

### **DISCIPLINE**

The guidelines for appropriate use stated in this document are applicable to all use of Alvord Independent School District computers and refer to all electronic communication systems and information resources, whether individually controlled, shared, standalone or networked. Disciplinary action for students, staff, and other users, shall be consistent with District policies and administrative regulations. The use of the District's ECS is a privilege and violations in the policies and guidelines stated herein may result in:

- Suspension from the ECS for a period of time;
- Revocation of access privileges/closing system account;
- Assigned to Temporary Alternative Placement;
- Termination of employment ;
- Other school disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the Alvord Independent School District and campus policies and applicable laws.
- Specific disciplinary measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

### **DISTRICT WEBSITE**

The District will maintain a District Website for the purpose of informing employees, students, parents and members of the community of District programs, policies, and current activities. Requests for publication of information on the District Web site must be directed in digital form to the designated Webmaster. The technology director will establish guidelines for the development and format of web pages controlled by the district.

No personally identifiable information regarding a student will be published on a web site controlled by the district without written permission from the student's parent or guardian. Only first names will be published for students in grades PK-6 with permission from their parents. First and last names may be used for students in grades 7 through 12 with permission from their parents. No home addresses, phone numbers or other personal information will be used.

### **STUDENT/CLASS WEB PAGES**

Students or classes may establish websites with the approval of the Technology Director and link them to the District's website. However, all material presented on the website must be related to the educational activities of the student. If the websites express opinions, the following notice must be included: "This is a student Web page. Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the District." Any links from a student's web page to sites outside the District's computer system must receive approval from the Technology Director.

### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Students shall retain all rights to work they create using the District's Electronic Communications System.

As agents of the District, employees shall have limited rights to work they create using the District's Electronic Communication System. The District shall retain the right to use any product created for its use by an employee even when the author is no longer an employee of the district.

### **STUDENT DATA**

The educational staff of Alvord Independent School District may be given access to student performance data to evaluate for the purpose of instructional decisions that will increase the opportunity for student success. Results of individual student performance on academic skills assessment instruments administered are confidential and may be released only in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

## **INFORMATION CONTENT/THIRD-PARTY SUPPLIED INFORMATION**

System users and parents of students with access to the systems of the District should be aware that use of the system may provide access to other electronic communications in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material.

- A student who gains access to such material is expected to discontinue the access as quickly as possible and to report the incident to the supervising teacher.
- A student knowingly bringing prohibited materials into the electronic environment of the school will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the systems of the District and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with District policies.

## **DISCLAIMER**

- The District's ECS is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether express or implied, including without limitation those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the ECS and any information or software contained therein.
- The District shall not be liable for the inappropriate use by the user of the District's ECS or violation of copyright restrictions, mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by the user. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on the Internet. The District's system will be used only for administrative and instructional purposes consistent with the District's policies with the exceptions noted herein.
- The District assumes no responsibility that the content of any advice or information received by a student or employee from a source outside the Alvord Independent School District or that the information or software contained on the system is accurate or will meet the user's needs.
- The district does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the ECS will meet the system user's requirements, or that the ECS will be uninterrupted or error free, or that defects will be corrected.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR FACULTY AND STAFF**

The Alvord Independent School District realizes that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning. To this aim, Alvord Independent School District has developed the following guideline to provide direction for instructional employees and the school district community when participating in online social media activities. Free speech protects educators who want to participate in social media, but the laws and courts have ruled that schools can discipline teachers if their speech, including online postings, disrupts school operations. The Alvord Independent School District social media guidelines encourage employees to participate in online social activities. But it is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability; keeping in mind that information produced by Alvord Independent School District teachers and students is a reflection on the entire district and is subject to the district's Acceptable Use Policy. By accessing, creating or contributing to any blogs, wikis, or other social media for classroom or district use, you agree to abide by these guidelines. Please read them carefully before posting or commenting on any blog or creating any classroom blog, wiki, podcast or any type of social media.

### **Personal Responsibility in Use of Social Media such as Facebook, Blogs, Wikis and Twitter**

- Alvord Independent School District employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- Online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional Standards.
- Remember that blogs, wikis, podcasts and all other social media are an extension of your classroom. What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.
- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as a Alvord School District employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students,

parents and the school community. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at Alvord School District.

- When contributing online do not post confidential student information.
- By posting your comments or having online conversations etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world. Be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what you 'say' online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private conversation' may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
- Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and by that token an extension of your professional life and your classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the wall - is it really correct to put it online?
- Remember your association and responsibility with the Alvord School District in online social environments. If you identify yourself as a Alvord District employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents, and students. How you represent yourself online should be comparable to how you represent yourself in person.
- Be cautious how you setup your profile, bio, avatar, etc.

**An employee who uses electronic media to communicate with students shall observe the following:**

- If an employee chooses to communicate with students via a social network page regarding school matters, the employee must create a professional social network page or account and only communicate through this professional page. The employee must allow district and campus level administrators and parents to access these social network pages or accounts. AISD employees are prohibited from communication with students through a personal social network page with one exception. Employees who are also parents of students can "friend" their child or child's friend from a personal site; but this is not recommended by the district.
- Employees are prohibited from following students on student twitter accounts.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with any one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- The employee will not put up any image of students who have not signed a media release form.
- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. Be sure not to plagiarize and give credit where it is due. When using a hyperlink, be sure that the content is appropriate.

## **EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

You are being given access to the District's electronic communications system. Through this system, you will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations, and people around the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems/networks. You will have access to hundreds of databases, libraries, and computer services all over the world.

With this opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that you read the District policy, administrative regulations, and agreement form and ask questions if you need help in understanding them. Inappropriate system use will result in the loss of the privilege of using this educational and administrative tool.

Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that you may run across some material you might find objectionable. While the District will take reasonable steps to restrict access to such material, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be your responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE**

- Suspension of access to the system;
- Revocation of the computer system account; or
- Other disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the District policies and applicable laws.

I understand that my computer use is not private and that the District may monitor my activity on the computer system, including but not limited to: logging all internet traffic and sites visited, logging all search queries, remotely viewing of the screen, viewing any files saved on or connected to any district resource (including "flash" drives, CD media, local PC hard drive, network drives, or internet websites), and viewing any email messages sent or received while at school or using school resources.

I have read the District's electronic communications system policy, Computer Use, and administrative regulations and agree to abide by their provisions. In consideration for the privilege of using the District's electronic communications system and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators, and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my use of, or inability to use, the system, including, without limitation, the type of damages identified in the District's policy and administrative regulations.

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Campus \_\_\_\_\_