

SUGAR VALLEY RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL

POLICY NUMBER: 236

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET
ACCEPTABLE USE

DATE ADOPTED: JANUARY 2002

DATE LAST REVISED: AUGUST 2009

COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district computer systems and acceptable use of the Internet. For the purposes of this policy, "computer systems" is defined to include any SVRCS equipment, and/or network access supplied by SVRCS, and any other devices used in conjunction with the school's equipment and/or network access.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding student access to the school district computer system and to the Internet, the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives, As well as those of particular significance to individuals living in a rural environment. Access to the school's computer system(s) and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging information with people in countries and cultures around the globe. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School promotes the use by faculty of the integration of the school's computer system resources and the Internet into the curriculum to deliver meaningful instruction and to provide thoughtful and responsible guidance and instruction to students in the use of these resources.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School is providing students and employees with access to the school's computer system resources, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is not merely to provide students and employees with general access to the Internet. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School computer system exists solely to support a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities. All users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School and its policies. For these reasons, uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on the school's limited-purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School computer system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- suspension or cancellation of system access privileges
- payments for damages and repairs, including all materials and labor expenses and equivalent staff salaries when staff initiate repairs
- discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment
- civil or criminal liability under applicable local, state, and/or federal laws

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

The following uses of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School computer systems and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

1. Users will not use the school's computer system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.
2. Users will not use the school's computer system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language.
3. Users will not use the school's computer system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting or disruptive to the educational process and will not post information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption.
4. Use of Internet and/or network based chat clients (ie, IRC, Yahoo, AOL, etc. and all programs falling into this genre) is prohibited on the network except for administratively approved instructional purposes, which shall be coordinated and supervised directly by an SVRCS instructor at all times during said approved use.
5. Users will not use the school's computer system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
6. Users will not use the school's computer system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
7. Users will not use the school's computer system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
8. Users will not use the school's computer system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the school district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school district system's security, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.

9. Users will not use the school's computer system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
10. Users will not use the school's computer system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
11. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school's computer system or any other system through the school, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user.
12. Users will not use the school's computer system to violate copyright laws, or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
13. Users will not use the school's computer system for the conduct of a business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district, to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement, or to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official.

If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. A user may also in certain rare instances access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior written approval of and with appropriate guidance from the supervising teacher.

VI. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of the school's computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with the policies and the mission of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School.

VII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

By authorizing use of the school district computer system, the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school's computer system.

- Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school's computer system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school policy, or the law.
- An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school policy.
- Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
- School employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school's computer system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under applicable Pennsylvania statutes, which exist or which may come to exist in the future.

- The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities and activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system. All compliance activities will be coordinated through the Administrative Triad and appropriate Board members.

VIII. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet. The Internet Use Agreement form must be read and signed by the user, the parent or legal guardian, and the teacher. The form must then be filed at the school office.

IX. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY

Use of the school's computer system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school or personal diskettes, tapes, or other portable storage devices, nor on school computer system hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or mis-deliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school's computer system. The Sugar Valley Rural Charter School will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school's computer system or the Internet.

X. USER NOTIFICATION

All users shall be notified of the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School policies relating to Internet use. This notification shall include the following:

1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with Sugar Valley Rural Charter School policies.
2. Disclaimers limiting the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School's liability relative to:
 - Information stored on school computer system diskettes, hard drives or servers, and information stored on diskettes, tapes, or other portable storage devices owned by users.
 - Information retrieved through school computer system computers, networks or online resources.
 - Personal property used to access school computer system computers, networks or online resources.
 - Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school computer system resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 - A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
3. Notification that, even though the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not guarantee a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this Acceptable Use Policy.

4. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a user through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the user or the user's parents/legal guardians.
5. Notification that should the user violate the Sugar Valley Rural Charter School Acceptable Use Policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
6. Notification that all provisions of the Acceptable Use Policy are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

XI. PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

Outside of school, parents/legal guardians bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with other information sources such as television, telephones, radio, games, movies and other possibly offensive media. Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring their child's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or from a remote location.

Parents/guardians will be notified that their child(children) will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school will provide parents/guardians the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:

- A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
- A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
- A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and a supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
- A statement that the school's Acceptable Use Policy is available for review.

XII. IMPLEMENTATION AND POLICY REVIEW

- The school district administration may develop appropriate guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- The administration shall revise the student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- The school district's Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, by guardians, by staff, and by members of the community.
- Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the school board may conduct an annual review of this policy, or a review of this policy as advancements in technologies warrant.

Sugar Valley Rural Charter School

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

JOINT SCHOOL/FAMILY/COMMUNITY AGREEMENT

STUDENT SECTION

I have read and do understand the school district policy relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by the policy. I further understand that any violation of the policy is unethical and may constitute a violation of law. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print): _____

User Signature: _____

Date: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN SECTION

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the school district policy relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the school district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school district or its employees or agents responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print): _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____