

Bessemer City Middle School



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ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Bessemer City Schools are pleased to make available to students access to computers, computer systems, and the Internet for educational purposes. The goal of the district is to provide innovation and educational excellence by the use of computer, computer systems, and the Internet for research, worldwide resource sharing, and communication. For the purpose of this acceptable use policy, the term "computer" is intended to have a broad interpretation. "Computer" as used herein, means the computer itself, along with all of the accessories and peripherals used in connection with the computer such as, but not limited to, servers, backup drivers, backup disks, network servers, communication servers, modems, Internet access software, CD ROMs, CD drives, printers, software, stored data, computer hardware, e-mail, and any as well as all business application consistent with the purposes of the school district. The use of computers in the school district in no way indicates a desire by the school district to create a designated or limited public forum through their usage.

I. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

All students must read and review the policy with their parents, sign with their parents, then return the signature page at the end of this policy to the student's teacher. All students, regardless of age, must have his/her parent/guardian read and sign the signature page at the end of the policy. The school district cannot provide computer access to any student who fails to return a signed signature page as directed. By signing the signature page of this policy, students agree to follow the rules of this policy and to report any misuse of computers and computer equipment. By signing the signature page of this policy, parents are indicating that they have read the policy and accept its term and conditions.

II. TERM OF THE PERMITTED USE

Students who submit a properly signed signature page for this policy and who follow this policy will have computer access during the course of the school year. Students will be asked to sign a new acceptable use policy signature page each year in which they are students, before they are given an access account.

III. ACCEPTABLE USE

This section of the policy describes the use of computers in the school district that are considered acceptable.

Examples of What Responsible Computer Users May Do:

1. Use computing facilities for educational purposes only. Students who have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational may consult with their teacher or with the school district's designated supervisor over computer uses.
 2. Research for assigned classroom projects, as directed by the teacher
 3. Send electronic mail (e-mail) to other users, as directed or permitted by the teacher
 4. Explore other computer systems in a legally appropriate manner
 5. Use the system efficiently, in terms of time, disk space, and printer facilities, in accordance with the following priority of uses:
 - (first priority) system administration and maintenance;
 - (Second priority) administrator, teacher, and staff use;
 - (Third priority) student use for group activities assigned by the teacher;
 - (Fourth priority) student's use by individual students pursuant to activities assigned by the teacher;
 - (Fifth priority) individual student use without assigned activity by the teacher;
 - (Sixth priority) individual student use for games.
- Lower priority users should give up their access to higher priority users when requested.
6. Be aware that the computing facilities are as secure as possible but that a user determined enough will break into the system. Therefore, confidential material should be stored on a school account.
 7. Change passwords frequently to ensure security.
 8. Use the computer and computer system in a safe manner.
 9. Use the mail system to hinder the ability of others to work, or to harass, intimidate, or otherwise annoy a person.
 10. Change computer files that do not belong to the user.
 11. Send or receive copyrighted material without permission from the copyright owner.
 12. Download or upload copyrighted software.
 13. Forward or re-post the personal information of another user without his or her permission.
 14. Send material over the Internet without someone else's name as author, without permission.
 15. Share a password with others or allow others to use a password to access the computer or Internet.
 16. Use the computer system for personal financial gain or profit.
 17. Use the computer system for the commercial exchange of goods or services.

Network Online Etiquette (Netiquette)

All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

1. Be polite and use appropriate language.
2. Don't assume that a sender of email is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties.
3. Don't give another person's email address to a third party without getting permission from the other person.
4. Be considerate when sending attachments with email. Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipients system and is in a format that the recipient can open.
5. Compose email and bulletins off-line in order to reduce unnecessary network traffic.
6. Make your "subject line" as descriptive as possible.
7. Always include a salutation before your message: "Dear John..."

8. Always sign your name and tell where you are from. If possible, include your email address.
9. Always restate or describe the question that you are answering or the issue on which you are commenting.
10. Always acknowledge that you have received a document or file that someone has sent you.
11. Check your email once or twice a week if you are expecting replies.
12. Delete email once you have read it.
13. Don't send personal messages on conferences, bulletin boards, or digests.
14. Don't expect an answer in less than 2-3 days.
15. When sending a file, give as much information as possible, including length, type, and contents.
16. Conference and bulletin board messages represent your abilities. Proofread and edit all messages.
17. Take care with the way you express yourself. Electronic text allows no context clues to convey shades of irony, sarcasm, or harmless humor.
18. Don't publicly criticize (or "flame") other network users.
19. Protect others' privacy.

PRIVACY

Computer, computer network and Internet access is provided a tool for education. The school district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and with prior notice any and all usage of computers and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All Such information files shall be and remain the property of the school district and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials. As such, all such information files remain under joint use doctrine for the purpose of search and seizure purposes.

VI. FAILURE TO FOLLOW POLICY

Failure to follow this acceptable use policy subjects the student user to a variety of penalties, including loss of access to computers in the school district or consequences outlined in the school district's code of conduct. A student user of computers in the school district violates this policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations of this policy by other users that come to the attention of the student. Further, a student user violates this policy if he or she permits another person to use his or her account or password to access a computer, the computer network, or Internet, including any other users whose access has been denied or terminated.

VII. WARRANTIES/INDEMNIFICATION

The school district makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of computers, its computer networks, and the Internet provided user this policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages, or costs, including attorney's fees, of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user of his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of the school district's computer equipment under this policy. By signing this policy, users are taking full responsibility for his or her use, and the user who is 18 years of age or older or, in the case of a user under the age 18, the parent(s) or guardian(s) are agreeing to indemnify and hold the school, school district, the data acquisition site that provides the computer and Internet access opportunity to the school district and all of the school district's administrators, teachers, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims, or damages resulting from the user's access

to the school district's computers, computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to cooperate with the school in the event of the school's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to the school's computer network and the internet, whether that use is on a school computer or on another computer outside the school district's network.

VIII. UPDATES

Users, and if appropriate, the user's parents/guardians, may be asked from time to time to provide new or additional registration and account information or to sign a new policy signature page, for example, to reflect developments in the law or technology. Such information must be provided by the user (or his or her parents or guardians) or such new policy signature page must be signed if the user wishes to continue to receive services. If after the user has provided account information some or all of the information changes, the user must notify the user's teacher or the supervisor of the district's computer uses.

SOURCE: Bessemer City Board of Education, Bessemer, AL

ADOPTED:

LEGAL REF: Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (H.R. 4577, P.L. 106-554); Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254 (h) (7); Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C 6801, et. Seq., Part F); Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier, 108 Ct 562 (1988); Bethel School District No. 403 v Fraser, 106 S. Ct. 3159 (1986); Perry Education Assn. V. Perry Local Educations Assn, 103 S. Ct. 948 (1983)

20. Be careful not to spread computer viruses. Always check downloaded files.

21. Don't leave a workstation unattended while a session is in progress (dangerous to personal files and belongings, reputation, and security).

VIII. INTERNET SAFETY

This section of the policy address concerns about the safety of student users and the integrity of the computer system.

General Warning:

Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users. All student users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to electronic materials may include the potential for access to material inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from inappropriate sites. Parents of minors are the best guides to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to a teacher or the school district's supervisor over computer uses.

Personal Safety

Students are urged to be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, students should not reveal personal information such as home address or telephone number. Students should not use his or her real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate the student without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher or parent/guardian. Students must not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone the student "meets" on the computer network or Internet without parental permission. Regardless of one's age, one should never agree to meet a person with whom they have communicated only on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.

Hackling and Other Illegal Activities

It is a violation of this policy to use the school's computer system to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems or to attempt to gain unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violate any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

Confidentiality of Student Information

Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the computer, computer systems, or Internet, without the permission of a parent/guardian, or if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself or herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release of directory information as defined by Alabama Law for internal administrative purposed or approved educational projects and activities.

Active Restriction Measures

The school district will use filtering software and/or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. The school district will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material that is in appropriate for minors. Internet filtering software or other technology-based protections systems may be disabled by contacting the school district's supervisor over computer uses, as necessary, for purposed of bona fide research or other educational projects being conducted by students age 17 or older.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. Section 254(b)(7), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image, file, or other depiction that (1) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, excretion; (2) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to 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; (3) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minor.



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USER AGREEMENT AND PARENT PERMISSION FORM

As a student user of computers in Bessemer City Schools, I hereby agree to comply with the above stated rules – utilizing resources and communicating with computers in a reliable fashion while honoring all relevant laws and restrictions.

Student Signature _____

As a parent or legal guardian of the minor student signing above, I grant permission for my son or daughter to access networked computer services such as electronic mail and the Internet. I understand that individuals and families may be held liable for violations. I understand that some material on the Internet may be objectionable, but I accept responsibility for guidance of Internet use – setting and conveying standards for my daughter or son to follow when selecting, sharing, or exploring information and media.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

(Please Print)
Name of Student _____

School _____ **Grade** _____

Social Security Number _____ **Birth Date** _____

Street Address _____

Home Telephone _____

As the student's teacher, I have read the rules articulated under the Acceptable Use Policy and will promote student use of computer equipment under the policy. Because the student may use computer resources for individual work or in the context of another class, I cannot be held responsible for the student's inappropriate use of equipment. As the student's teacher, I agree to instruct the student on acceptable use of the equipment and proper system etiquette, but I nor the school district can guarantee that students will not gain unauthorized access. As such, neither myself, nor the school district is liable for such unauthorized access.

Teacher's Name (please print) _____

Teacher's Signature _____ **Date** _____