

## **STUDENT USE OF THE INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The Internet and electronic communications (e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of electronic communication) have vast potential to support curriculum and student learning. Centennial BOCES believes they should be used in Centennial BOCES schools and programs as a learning resource to educate and to inform.

Use of the Internet and electronic communications require students to think critically analyze information, write clearly, use problem-solving skills, and hone computer and research skills that employers demand. Use of these tools also encourages an attitude of lifelong learning and offers an opportunity for students to participate in distance learning activities, ask questions of and consult with experts, communicate with other students and individuals, and locate material to meet educational and personal information needs.

The Internet and electronic communications are fluid environments in which students may access materials and information from many sources, including some that may be harmful to students. While it is impossible to predict with certainty what information students might locate or come into contact with, Centennial BOCES shall take reasonable steps to protect students from accessing material and information that is obscene, child pornography or otherwise harmful to minors, as defined by the Board. Students shall take responsibility for their own use of Centennial BOCES technology devices to avoid contact with material or information that may be harmful to minors. For purposes of this policy, "Centennial BOCES technology device" means any Centennial BOCES-owned computer, hardware, software, or other technology that is used for learning purposes and has access to the internet.

### **Blocking or Filtering Obscene, Pornographic and Harmful Information**

Technology that blocks or filters material and information that is obscene, child pornography, or is otherwise harmful to minors, as defined by the Board, shall be installed on all Centennial BOCES computers having Internet or electronic communications access. Students shall report access to material and information that is inappropriate, offensive or otherwise in violation of this policy to the supervising staff member. If a student becomes aware of other students accessing such material or information, he or she shall report it to the supervising staff member.

### **No Expectation of Privacy**

Centennial BOCES technology devices are owned by Centennial BOCES and are intended for educational purposes at all times. Students shall have no expectation of privacy when using Centennial BOCES technology devices. Centennial BOCES reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store (at any time and without prior notice) all usage of Centennial BOCES technology devices, including all Internet and electronic communications access and transmission/receipt of materials and information. All material and information accessed/received through Centennial BOCES technology devices shall remain the property of Centennial BOCES.

### **Unauthorized and Unacceptable Uses**

Students shall use Centennial BOCES technology devices in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

Because technology and ways of using technology are constantly evolving, every unacceptable use of Centennial BOCES technology devices cannot be specifically described in policy. Therefore, examples of unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following:

No student shall access, create, transmit, retransmit or forward material or information:

- that promotes violence or advocates destruction of property including, but not limited to, access to information concerning the manufacturing or purchasing of destructive devices or weapons
- that is not related to Centennial BOCES education objectives
- that contains pornographic, obscene or other sexually oriented materials, either as pictures or writings, that are intended to stimulate erotic feelings or appeal to prurient interests in nudity, sex, or excretion
- that harasses, threatens, demeans, or promotes violence or hatred against another person or group of persons in violation of Centennial BOCES's nondiscrimination policy
- for personal profit, financial gain, advertising, commercial transaction or political purposes
- that plagiarizes the work of another that uses inappropriate or profane language likely to be offensive to others in the Centennial BOCES community
- that is knowingly false or could be construed as intending to purposely damage another person's reputation
- in violation of any federal or state law or Centennial BOCES policy, including but not limited to, copyrighted material and material protected by trade secret
- that contains personal information about themselves or others, including information protected by confidentiality laws
- using another individual's Internet or electronic communications account without written permission from that individual
- that impersonates another or transmits through an anonymous remailer
- that accesses fee services without specific permission from the system administrator

### **Security**

Security on Centennial BOCES technology devices is a high priority. Students who identify a security problem while using Centennial BOCES technology devices must immediately notify a system administrator. Students should not demonstrate the problem to other users. Logging on to the Internet or electronic communications as a system administrator is prohibited.

Students shall not:

- use another person's password or any other identifier
- gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to Centennial BOCES technology devices
- read, alter, delete or copy, or attempt to do so, electronic communications or other system users

Any user identified as a security risk, or as having a history of problems with technology, may be denied access to the Internet and electronic communications and/or Centennial BOCES technology devices.

### **Safety**

In the interest of student safety and security, Centennial BOCES shall educate students about appropriate online behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response; and interacting on social networking sites, in chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Students shall not reveal personal information, such as home address or phone number, while using the Internet or electronic communications. Without first obtaining permission of the supervising staff member, students shall not use their last name or any other information that

might allow another person to locate him or her. Students shall not arrange face-to-face meetings with persons met on the Internet or through electronic communications.

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and may result in disciplinary action and/or legal action, including suspension and/or expulsion, in accordance with Centennial BOCES or applicable district's policy concerning student suspension, expulsion and other disciplinary interventions. Vandalism is defined as any malicious or intentional attempt to harm, destroy, modify, abuse, or disrupt operation of any network within Centennial BOCES or any network connected to the Internet, operation of any form of electronic communications, the data contained on any network or electronic communications, the data of another user, usage by another user, or Centennial BOCES technology device. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses and the use of encryption software.

### **Unauthorized Content**

Students are prohibited from using or possessing any software applications, mobile apps or other content that has been downloaded or is otherwise in the user's possession without appropriate registration and payment of any fees.

### **Assigning Student Projects and Monitoring Student Use**

Centennial BOCES will make reasonable efforts to see that the Internet and electronic communications are used responsibly by students. Administrators, teachers, and staff have a professional responsibility to work together to monitor students' use of the Internet and electronic communications, help students develop the intellectual skills needed to discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use information to meet their educational goals. Students shall have specifically defined objectives and search strategies prior to accessing material and information on the Internet and through electronic communications.

All students shall be supervised by staff while using the Internet or electronic communications at a ratio of at least one staff member to each thirty (30) students. Staff members assigned to supervise student use shall have received training in Internet and electronic communications safety and monitoring student use.

### **Student Use is a Privilege**

Use of the Internet and electronic communications demands personal responsibility and an understanding of the acceptable and unacceptable uses of such tools. Student use of the Internet, electronic communications, and Centennial BOCES technology devices is a privilege, not a right. Failure to follow the use procedures contained in this policy shall result in the loss of the privilege to use these tools and restitution for costs associated with damages, and may result in disciplinary action and/or legal action, including suspension and or expulsion, in accordance with Centennial BOCES's or applicable district's policy concerning student suspension, expulsion and other disciplinary interventions. Centennial BOCES may deny, revoke or suspend access to Centennial BOCES technology or close accounts at any time.

Students and parents/guardians shall be required to sign the Centennial BOCES's Acceptable Use Agreement annually before Internet or electronic communications accounts shall be issued or access shall be allowed.

**Centennial BOCES Makes no Warranties**

Centennial BOCES makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, related to the use of Centennial BOCES technology devices, including access to the Internet and electronic communications services. Providing access to these services does not imply endorsement by Centennial BOCES of the content, nor does Centennial BOCES make any guarantee as to the accuracy or quality of information received. Centennial BOCES shall not be responsible for any damages, losses, or costs a student suffers in using the Internet and electronic communications. This includes loss of data and service interruptions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet and electronic communications is at the student's own risk.

LEGAL REFS.:           20 U.S.C. 6751 et seq. Enhancing Education Through Technology Act of 2001  
                              47 U.S.C. 254(h) Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000  
                              47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart F Universal Support for Schools and Libraries

CROSS REFS.:           AC, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity  
                              JB, Equal Educational Opportunities  
                              JKD/JKE, Suspension/Expulsion of Students

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Centennial BOCES