

## **STAFF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

We are pleased to offer the staff of the Winchester Public Schools access to the district computer network resources, electronic mail, telephone, voice mail and the Internet. These Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and guidelines serve as a written agreement between the Winchester Public Schools and its staff. It outlines the appropriate uses for technology, phone, email, Internet, and voice mail in the district as well as the consequences for failure to adhere to those guidelines. To use these resources, all staff must sign this form and return it to their building principal. Any questions or concerns about this permission form or any aspect of the computer network should be referred to your school's Building Principal.

### **General Network and Technology Use**

Technology in the Winchester Public Schools will be used in collaboration with curriculum, and to fulfill professional responsibilities. Computers and other technology equipment are tools used to support the teaching and learning process. The network is provided to staff for educational purposes only that will enhance the teaching and learning process. Each staff member is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her appropriate use of the Internet and follow all conditions and rules of technology use as presented by the Winchester Public Schools. Any violation of the conditions and rules may result in possible legal and/or disciplinary action.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators and administration may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should assume that files stored on the district servers or Google Drive will always be public and available for anyone.

### **User's Privileges and Responsibilities**

Users of Winchester Public Schools equipment may:

- Use all authorized hardware and software, when available, for which they have received training to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Access information from outside resources which facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Access district networks and the Internet to retrieve information, facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- Use their winchesterps.org electronic mail in lieu of other personal email accounts and for purposes directly related to work related activities.

### **Users are responsible for:**

- Utilizing technology in the school only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the educational mission of the Winchester Public Schools.
- Maintaining the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords.
- Keeping all inappropriate materials, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the school's network, equipment, and software from entering the school via the Internet.

- Keeping hardware and software from being removed from school premises without prior consent.
- Using only personal computers with the district network system that has been approved by the network manager.
- Maintaining the integrity of the email system and making only those email contacts, which facilitate learning and enhance information exchange.
- Keeping all food and drink away from computers, printers, mobile devices, etc.
- Adhering to all copyright guidelines, fair use guidelines, and avoiding plagiarism.
- Adhering to the rules established for the use of hardware, software, labs, and networks in the school and through remote access.
- Engaging in no harassment, bullying, hazing, or cyberbullying. The Winchester Public Schools Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, which is distributed to all school employees, is applicable to Internet conduct.
- The security of his/her own password.
- Returning all Winchester Public School owned hardware and software when their employment in the Winchester Public Schools has ended.

### **Internet / Email Access**

Access to the Internet and district (winchesterps.org) email will enable staff to use thousands of libraries and databases. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. Staff should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. Filtering software is in use, but no filtering system is capable of blocking 100% of the inappropriate material available on the Internet. We believe that the benefits to students and staff from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, Staff, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

### **The activities listed below are not permitted:**

- Using a code, accessing a file, or retrieving any stored communication unless they have been given authorization to do so
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, bullying, cyberbullying, insulting or attacking others. The Winchester Public Schools Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Policy is applicable to internet use.
- Using social networking websites that do not support teaching and learning. Please refer to the Winchester Public Schools Social Networking Guidelines which are attached to this AUP.
- Participating in any communications that facilitate any illegal activities or violate any other laws
- Transferring, copying, or downloading any non-educational material that does not support teaching and learning such as music or inappropriate images

- Damaging or modifying computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Removing hardware and/or software from school premises without prior consent
- Eating food and drink near computers
- Violating copyright laws and committing plagiarism
- Using others' passwords
- Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud
- Utilizing district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system
- Using non-Winchester Public School email accounts for educational purposes or purposes related to their profession

#### **Audit of Use**

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process to determine whether the district's education technology is being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access for both minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to computers with Internet access by minors, harmful to minors.
2. Maintaining and securing a usage log.
3. Monitoring online activities.

#### **Consequences**

Failure to adhere to the technology conditions and rules of the Winchester Public Schools will result in disciplinary action, which could include but not be limited to the following:

- Revocation of access to any Winchester Public Schools computers in the building
- Revocation of network privileges and/or access
- Possible legal and/or disciplinary action

The ultimate consequences are at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

ADOPTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE: June 16, 2015

*Winchester Public Schools would like to thank and acknowledge Reading Public Schools and Burlington Public Schools for use of their Staff Computer/Network/Internet/Telephone User Agreement.*

## SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Social networking tools such as Facebook, Google +, LinkedIn, and Twitter have quickly become an integral part of our society. The Winchester Public Schools encourage the use of social networking tools by educators for professional collaboration and communication, creating their own professional learning network, and for educational purposes with students. When communicating with students and families utilizing any electronic media or device, it is important to maintain the appropriate boundaries in the student/teacher relationship or parent/teacher relationship.

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind current staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on line, digital world and adhering to appropriate boundaries in the student/teacher relationship. A separate set of guidelines for the educational use of social networking tools that are aligned with the Winchester Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy will be distributed and communicated annually to staff. The School Department's policy with regard to teacher interactions with students and families utilizing technology, such as electronic mail, social networking websites, cell phones and any other electronic device is as follows:

1. Online Interactions with Students Using Facebook and Similar Internet Sites or Social Networks, or Via Cell Phone, Texting or Telephone.
  - a. All electronic contacts by staff with students and families should be through the district's email, sites and telephone systems, except in emergency situations. Staff members will always use their Winchester Public Schools email address and will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers, or personal emails, without prior approval of the Principal. This policy does not apply to family relationships.
  - b. Staff members may not list current Winchester Public School students or former Winchester Public School students below the age of 18, as "friends" on private or personal networking sites. Staff members may list current Winchester Public School students on public social networking sites which are used for educational purposes. For those sites, staff members must use their Winchester Public School email address.
  - c. Coaches and club/activity advisors will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers, or personal emails, without prior approval of the Principal. All contact and messages by coaches and club/activity advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters.
  - d. The district will educate staff members on all capabilities of the district's system as well as other acceptable social networking tools in order that staff will not feel a need to utilize their own personal resources.
2. Privacy of Online Content: Staff members are reminded that items placed online are never fully private and may affect how students, parents, administrators and peers

perceive them. Posting items with sexual content and those exhibiting or advocating use of illegal drugs or alcohol is poor judgment and may be deemed inappropriate. The Superintendent or designees may periodically conduct internet searches to see if Staff have posted inappropriate materials online. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

3. **Monitoring of Online Conduct:** The School Department retains the right to monitor its internal technology systems. When inappropriate use of computers and websites reaches the attention of administration, the School Principal will promptly bring this to the attention of the staff member and the Superintendent. After investigation, and due process, disciplinary action for failure to exercise good judgment in online conduct, may be applied.
4. **Staff Shall Adhere to Existing Standards of Conduct in Connection with Electronic Communications with Students:** Staff are already under an obligation to maintain appropriate boundaries in their relationships with students (e.g., Staff should avoid excessive attention to a student, communicate only on school related activities, maintain professionalism, etc.). These same standards apply to electronic communications with students (e.g., utilizing social networking, email, "texting," cell phone communications or any other electronic media or device).

SOURCE: WINCHESTER

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

CROSS REFS: IJND, Access to Electronic Media

IJNDB, Student Acceptable Use Policy

ADOPTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE: June 16, 2015

*Winchester Public Schools would like to thank and acknowledge Reading Public Schools for use of their Social Networking Policy as a reference.*

## SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY GUIDELINES

### 1. Internet AUP still in force

This policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

### 2. General Concerns

The Winchester Public Schools recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness, of online conversation between Staff and students. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and planning, that the lines between one's own professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise.

Should an educator "friend" a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student's "twitter" account, regularly engage in email "chat" with a student, exchange text messages with students or engage in other electronic communication, the school district is concerned, and the educator should be concerned, that such activities may undermine the educator's authority to maintain discipline, encourage inappropriate behaviors and compromise the educator's ability to remain truly objective with his or her students.

### 3. Expectations of Staff

With these concerns in mind, the Winchester Public Schools has instituted this "Social Networking Policy" and announces its expectations for staff members' use of social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technological based communication systems.

- a. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, staff should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. Staff must educate themselves to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site they select. They will be responsible should any information that is intended to be "private"
  - i. becomes "public" due to ignorance of the features of the social network that are being used or failure to properly use such features.
- b. Staff must also know that any information shared privately with a recipient could be re distributed by such recipient, without the staff member's knowledge or consent. The same principles applied during in person communication should be applied to online conversation: discretion should be used, and trust should not be placed in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing staff posts online is ever truly "private."
- c. The Winchester Public Schools district expects staff to keep the line between their professional life and their personal life clearly drawn. There is no reason

why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for

- i. both professional and personal life, to be sure that these lines never become blurred. For example, if the district does not maintain a web portal for communications with students and families and an educator wishes to establish a Facebook account through which he or she will communicate with students, he or she should establish a Facebook identity that is separate from his/her “personal” Facebook identity. He/she should only use his/her educational Facebook account to communicate with students on matters directly related to education. The “friends” associated with such educational Facebook accounts should only be members of the educational community, such as administrators, Staff, students, and parents of such students. It is strongly recommended that Staff will reject friend requests from individuals who do not fit into any of these categories.
1. At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an educational Facebook account, a teacher may not post confidential student information on the “wall”, the “information” section, or through any part of that Facebook account that would be accessible to other of the Teacher’s Facebook “friends” associated with that account. If a teacher wishes to communicate privately with a student through the educational Facebook account, such communication shall be conveyed only through the private email/message feature of Facebook, so that only the student may view the message and respond to it.
2. Staff are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school based resources, such as school provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one’s personal email account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because a teacher uses his/her personal email as opposed to a school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the school district’s automatic email archiving system. Staff should also use their school provided email when establishing a social networking account for educational purposes. Staff should only use the student’s Winchester email address when communicating.
3. If a teacher conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her

private account, he/she should save such email or print and save a paper copy of such email and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.

4. No matter what medium of communication a teacher selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate teacher/student boundaries. Winchester Public School staff are expected to be role models, not a student's friend, and they should always conduct themselves in accordance with this understanding.
  
5. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a teacher's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of their job duties. However, when a staff member speaks via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning work, that person is speaking as an employee and not as a citizen; restrictions may be placed upon the freedom to express themselves. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain a person's status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in the classroom, and remain objective with respect to students.
  
6. Staff are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal Facebook accounts to communicate with students. Communications with students, even if it does not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of that person's position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school district or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if a person is not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the school district's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If a behavior is inappropriate, undermines a person's authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises objectivity, or harms students, the school district reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior.
  
7. Staff may only access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using school district computer resources during nonteaching times.
  
8. If a staff member is communicating as an employee of the district in online communications, he or she must be aware that readers will assume they "speak for the school district." Therefore, all of online communications, when a staff member is actually acting on behalf of the district, or creating the appearance that they are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the school district.

9. In the use of your Facebook account or other social networking sites, a staff member may not, without express permission from the Superintendent of Schools, use the school's logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school.
  
10. References to "Facebook" are not included to limit application of this policy to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.

ADOPTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE: June 16, 2015

*Winchester Public Schools would like to thank and acknowledge Reading Public Schools and Burlington Public Schools for use of their Social Networking Guidelines as a foundation.*

**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
STAFF STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Staff Expectations**

I have read, understand and will follow the Acceptable Use and Social Networking Policies. If I break this agreement, the consequences could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network and email accounts are owned by Winchester Public School and that Winchester Public Schools has the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Staff Device Delivery, Access, and Use Statement**

Please be aware that all documents, pictures, videos, and data need to be saved to cloud services such as Google Drive or a staff's district home drive. When staff laptop computer devices require service, devices may be picked up and exchanged. Staff may not have the opportunity to save or transfer local data upon the exchange.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ADOPTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE: June 16, 2015