



CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY TECHNOLOGY

To promote educational excellence in district schools, the Board of Education recognizes the need to provide access to computers and other electronic communications equipment for students, staff, employees, volunteers and visitors. Access to computer networks, including the Internet, facilitates resource sharing, innovation, collaboration and communication.

The Board of Education encourages computer use as an integral part of the curriculum. It is the user's responsibility to access the Internet in support of education and academic research consistent with the educational objectives of the school district.

All technology services and equipment of the City School District of the City of Albany, including all messages transmitted by, received or stored on them, are the sole property of the Albany city schools. Equipment is solely for the educational and business purposes of the Albany city schools. Any unauthorized use is prohibited. Such unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to: accessing, posting, or downloading pornographic material; computer "hacking" and other related activities; attempting to disable or compromise school district computer systems or networks including technology protection measures taken by the school district; attempting to access another student or employee's files; forging electronic mail messages; and any other illegal or improper purpose. The creation or forwarding of offensive, demeaning, discriminatory or disruptive messages is also prohibited. Downloading copyrighted material without proper permission or authorization is also prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, messages that are inconsistent with school district policies including the policies prohibiting sexual harassment and all other forms of harassment.

The school district reserves the right, at any time, to access, review and monitor the use of electronic communication services, equipment and usage, as well as the data that is stored or transmitted. Students and employees should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality while utilizing these services and equipment. When an individual leaves the school district, (s)he is expected to return his/her equipment in good working condition.

Electronic communication services and equipment includes electronic mail, Internet access, computer hardware and software, computer systems, handheld personal devices (e.g., Palm Pilots), printers, scanners, copiers, facsimiles, telephone systems, computer networks, on-line services, computer files, telex systems, digital cameras, video equipment and tapes, tape recorders and recordings, pagers, cellular phones and electronic bulletin boards.

In accordance with the requirements of the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the school district shall maintain technology protection measures which will protect against and filter Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or which would be harmful to minors if viewed by minors. These technology protection measures may be disabled for adults engaging in legitimate research or other school purposes. The system administrator designated by the District is the Director of Information and Instructional Technology.

Any student who violates this policy or uses the Internet or electronic mail system for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline pursuant to the school district's Code of Conduct and Education Law section 3214.

Any employee who violates this policy or uses the Internet or electronic mail system for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination pursuant to law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement provision. Copyrighted, or "proprietary" computer software and documentation may not be reproduced other than to make archival backups or because a copy is an essential step to use a computer program with a specific machine. "Shareware" software in the public domain may be copied without restriction.

The school district reserves the right to change this policy and accompanying regulations at any time as may be required under the circumstances.

The superintendent of schools is directed to establish the appropriate regulations and procedures to effectively implement this policy.

The school district reserves the right to monitor all student and employee e-mail and Internet access at any time. Any unauthorized use is prohibited. Examples of reasons for school district monitoring include, but are not limited to: compliance with the federal CIPA, system maintenance or repairs, investigation of an alleged breach of security of the computer system, any alleged violations of school district policy or in response to law enforcement requests. No rights of privacy from use of school district computers are intended nor should any user, including all students and employees, expect them.

ACCEPTABLE USE

The school district maintains a computer network with access to e-mail and the Internet. This system is provided by the school district for educational and academic research purposes, professional development, communication and publication consistent with the school district's mission and goals.

All users must have permission from the superintendent of schools and/or the building principal before utilizing the district computer network system. Permission is not transferable from one user to another and may not be shared. In addition, all users, including administrators, teachers, teacher's aides and assistants, and secretaries, must sign agreement forms as follows: Parents or legal guardians must sign a permission form for students to have internet access.

- Students must sign the "Student Agreement for Use of the Computer Network System" form; and
- All District employees must sign the "District Employee Agreement for Use of the Computer Network System" form.

All district employees are required to abide by district rules and policies, including the Technology Policy, and will be provided with a copy of this policy. Use of the school district's computer network is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate usage will result in the suspension or revocation of that privilege pending a review by the appropriate administrator.

All district employees or students whose accounts are denied, suspended or revoked have the right to request a written statement justifying the actions taken by the system administrator.

When access to an Internet site has been denied by the system administrator, district employees or students may submit a written appeal, Request for Evaluation of an Internet Site form (attached) to the system administrator requesting a meeting with the administrator, to include as appropriate the student, parent or guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age), and any other involved staff.

E-MAIL

The school district maintains an electronic mail system. This system is provided by the school district for educational and academic research purposes, professional development, communication and publication consistent with the school district's mission and goals.

1. The school district insists that all users follow the highest ethical standards when utilizing the electronic mail system. E-mail is for school business use only and not for personal business uses which include, but are not limited to, personal communication, junk mailings, chain letters, solicitations, harassment, etc. The school district reserves the right to monitor e-mail at any given time without notice. Any violation in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.
2. The electronic mail system hardware is school district property. Additionally, all messages composed, sent, forwarded or received on the electronic mail system are and remain the property of the school district. The messages are not the private property of the sender or the recipient.
3. The electronic mail system shall not be used to solicit for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non school-related solicitations.
4. The electronic mail system shall not be used to create, send or forward any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those messages which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin or disability. Messages which are considered disruptive include, but are not limited to, offensive messages, messages which intentionally contain viruses, and spam.
5. The electronic mail system shall not be used to send (upload), receive (download) or forward any copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary information, or similar materials without prior authorization, or the expressed permission of the author or owner of the copyright or trademark.

6. The school district reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose any and all messages created, received, forwarded or sent over the electronic mail system.
7. The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality. All passwords must be disclosed to the school district or they are invalid and cannot be used. All passwords are maintained by the system administrator and may be used by the system administrator for maintaining, auditing and investigating the system and its usage. The system administrator shall disable or remove any password that has not been disclosed to the school district. Passwords are deemed to include passwords, screen names, login names, and secret access codes. The unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors is specifically prohibited.
8. Notwithstanding the school district's right to retrieve and read any e-mail messages, such messages must be treated as confidential by other students and district employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. E-mail users are prohibited from accessing, retrieving, or reading any e-mail messages not sent to them. Any exception to this prohibition must receive prior approval by the intended recipient or a school district administrator.
9. Users shall not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored information, unless authorized to do so. Users shall not attempt to gain access to another user's messages without the latter's permission. All computer pass codes must be provided to the system administrator. No pass code may be used that is unknown to the school district.
10. Any employee who discovers a violation of this policy shall notify the Assistant Superintendent for Business or his/her designee.
11. The school district may be required to release any messages, documents, files or record of use stored on a district server or hard drive pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) or by subpoena. Any messages, documents, files or record of use stored on a district server or hard drive may be accessed through the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) or subpoena.

INTERNET USE

The school district provides Internet access. This system is provided by the school district for educational and academic research purposes, professional development, communication and publication consistent with the school district's mission and goals.

1. Any unauthorized use of the school district provided Internet access is prohibited. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to: connecting, posting or downloading pornographic material; engaging in computer "hacking", and other related activities; attempting to disable or compromise the security of the school district's computer system or any other computer system.

2. Postings may be placed on the Internet only with the prior authorization of a school district administrator. Such record shall include the date, Internet address and content of the posting; the anticipated period of time that the posting is to remain on the Internet; the names(s) of the person(s) who posted the information, will maintain or update the information, and will remove the information; and the name of the school district administrator who authorized the posting.
3. Information posted or viewed on the Internet may constitute published, copyrighted or trademarked protected material. Any reproduction of information or photographic material posted or otherwise available over the Internet may be done only with the express permission of the author or owner of the copyright or trademark.
4. Users may not establish Internet or other external network connections, which could permit unauthorized persons to gain access to the school district's computer systems, files and other information. These connections include the establishment of hosts with public modem dial-ins, World Wide Web home pages and File Transfer Protocol (FTP) servers.
5. Any user who violates these regulations or uses the school district's Internet access capabilities for improper purposes shall be subject to discipline.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

The School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the computer services it provides. The school district will not be responsible for the quality, availability, accuracy, nature or reliability of the service and/or information accessed.

In accordance with the federal CIPA, the school district has installed and maintains technology protection measures with N2H2 Filtering Software. If these measures prevent appropriate and education related access to research by teachers, (s)he should contact the system administrator for information on how the measures may be disabled.

Each user is responsible for verifying the integrity and authenticity of the information that is used and provided. All materials over the Internet are assumed to be copyrighted.

Internet Filtering Review Procedures

The CIPA mandates that schools adopt both an Internet Safety Policy and a technology protection measure for computers in Internet access. This requirement is for school districts that receive funding through Title III or the Elementary & Secondary Act, of the Library Services & Technology Act. Districts are free to choose any filtering or blocking technology, but the act does specify whose access must be filtered and which types of materials must be blocked.

To address Internet sites that are blocked through the district filtering system, the following protocols are established. All questions or complaints concerning the appropriateness of specific Internet sites should be addressed to the Director of Information and Instructional Technology. If it is deemed by that office that a building decision needs to be made, a building team consisting of a teacher, librarian, supervisor, and/or principal should evaluate the site within two school days using the following guidelines:

- a. listening to and clarifying the objection
- b. examining the Internet site
- c. Verbally explaining the reasons why the Internet site was selected

Criteria for the building decision should be based on local standards, and comply with the district Acceptable Use Policy. If the staff member is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may file a Request for Reevaluation of an Internet Site form with the superintendent, department supervisor, and teacher and/or librarian. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction will convene an ad hoc Internet Filtering Site Review Committee that will meet to review the complaint and make recommendations. The committee will consist of:

- a. Assistant Superintendent for Instruction (Chair)
- b. Principal of school involved
- c. Appropriate supervisor
- d. Three faculty members, at least one from the curriculum area related to the challenged Internet site, selected from a standing committee of teachers willing to serve
- e. Parent member from building PTA/PTO

The staff member personally involved in the complaint may not participate on the review team. However, (s)he will be asked to provide input/background on the challenged Internet site. The Internet Site Review Committee is charged with the responsibility of viewing the challenged site; checking the general acceptance of the site's contents; weighing the strengths and weaknesses of the site in question; and judging the Internet site on its conformity to the criteria stated above. The committee shall report its findings and make a recommendation to the superintendent not later than 15 school days after receipt of the Request for Reevaluation.

All concerned parties will be notified in writing within five school days of the superintendent's final disposition of the matter, together with a rationale supporting the decision. Should the decision be unacceptable to the parties involved, an appeal to the Board of Education may be lodged with the Clerk of the Board within 10 days of the decision.

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

Student Agreement for Use of the Computer Network System

Student Name _____ Grade Level _____

School _____

I have read the City School District of Albany’s Technology Policy and I agree to abide by its provisions. I understand that I have no right to privacy when I use the district’s computer network system, the Internet and email, and I consent to the district monitoring my communications. I further understand that any violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of my system access and related privileges, other disciplinary action, as appropriate and possible legal action.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Approved By _____ Date _____

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

District Employee Agreement for Use of the Computer Network System

I have read the City School District of Albany’s Technology Policy and I agree to abide by its provisions. I agree to use the district’s computer network system only during business hours. I understand that I have no right to privacy when I use the district’s computer network system, the Internet and email, and I consent to the district monitoring my communications. I further understand that any violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of my system access and related privileges, other disciplinary action, as appropriate and possible legal action.

User Signature _____ Date _____

Approved By:

Building Principal _____ Date _____

Superintendent _____ Date _____

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

Request for Reevaluation of an Internet Site

Request Initiated by _____ Date _____

School _____ Phone Number _____

Complaint represents (check if applicable): Self _____ Organization or Group _____

If group, name _____

Internet Site in Question _____

Course/Teacher _____

1. Did you review the entire site?
2. What is the intent or purpose for using this site?
3. What in the site do you feel is appropriate or objectionable?
4. What is of value or harm in using this site?
5. For what age group would you recommend this site?
6. What action do you recommend that the school take on this particular site?

Return form to System Administrator

SAMPLE LETTER – PARENTAL NOTICE ON STUDENT USE OF THE INTERNET

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The City School District of Albany wishes to offer your child access to the Internet, via our educational computer network system. With your permission, your child will have access to various software application, hundreds of databases, libraries and computer services from all over the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems.

With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that you and your child read the enclosed Technology Policy and consent and waiver form carefully. You should both understand that failure to comply with the district's policy or regulations might result in suspension and/or revocation of your child's computer and/or Internet access and related privileges, other disciplinary action, as appropriate, and possible legal action.

As indicated in the enclosed policy, the district will attempt to discourage access to objectionable material and communications. However in spite of our efforts to establish regulations governing the use of the district's computer network system and student access to the Internet, a variety of inappropriate and offensive materials are available over the Internet, and it may be possible for your child to access these materials inadvertently or if he/she chooses to behave irresponsibly. In addition, it is possible for undesirable or ill-intended individuals to attempt to communicate with your child over the Internet. There is no practical means for the district to prevent this from happening in all instances, and your child must take responsibility to avoid such communications if they are initiated.

The above information is included to ensure that your decision regarding your child's access to the Internet is an informed one. You must be the one to decide whether the benefits of your child having access to the Internet outweigh the potential risks.

Finally, please contact me if you have any questions about this letter, the enclosed policy or the agreement that is attached. I also invite you to call me if you would like to schedule a time when a member of our staff can show you the computer network system and the Internet and how together they can benefit your child's education. We believe that in order for you to make the best decision for your child, you must have complete and accurate information.

If you wish to allow your child access to the Internet, please return the enclosed consent and waiver form to your child's principal. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely

System Administrator

PARENT CONSENT AND WAIVER FOR INTERNET USE

I have read the district's Technology Policy with my child, and I have received the letter from the district's system administrator regarding students' access to the Internet as part of the district's educational program.

I understand that my child's access to the Internet is designed solely for educational purposes. I also understand that a variety of inappropriate and offensive materials are available over the Internet and that it may be possible for my child to access these materials inadvertently if he/she chooses to behave irresponsibly. I further accept that it is possible for undesirable or ill-intended individuals to communicate with my child over the Internet, that there is no practical means for the district to prevent this from happening in all instances, and that my child must take responsibility to avoid such communications if they are initiated. While I consent to the district monitoring communications to or from my child on the Internet, I recognize that it is not possible for the district to monitor all such communications.

I have determined that the benefits of my child having access to the Internet outweigh potential risks, and I will not hold the district responsible for materials acquired or contacts made on the Internet. Furthermore, I understand that any violation of these provisions may result in suspension or revocation of my child's access to the computer network system, Internet, and related privileges, other disciplinary action, as appropriate, and possible legal action.

In consideration for the privilege of my child's using the district's computer network system, and in consideration for having access thereby to the Internet, I hereby release the City School District of Albany, its operators, and any institutions with which they are affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use or inability to use the system, including without limitation, the type of damages identified in the District's Technology policy.

Accordingly, (Please check one)

I give permission for my child to have access to the Internet, and I certify that the information I have been provided, and the assurances I have given, are correct.

I do not give my permission for my child to access to the Internet.

Student Name _____ Grade Level _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____