

## **WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

### **EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

The Westborough Public School District offers Internet access for student use. Access to the school network and the Internet System is a privilege not a right. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for student use of the Westborough Public Schools' Internet System.

1. Westborough Schools' Internet System has been established for a limited Educational purpose. The term **"educational purpose"** includes classroom activities, career development and quality independent learning.
2. The Westborough Public Schools' Internet System has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Westborough Public School District has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material students access or post through the system.
3. Students may not use the Westborough system for commercial purposes. This means that students may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the Westborough Internet System.
4. Students may not use the Westborough Public Schools' Internet System for political lobbying. Students may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express opinions on political issues.
5. Westborough Public Schools filters Internet content in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act.

### **STUDENT INTERNET ACCESS**

1. All students will have access to the Internet information resources through their classroom, media center or computer lab.
2. Students who use e-mail will do so only for educational purposes.
3. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any messages they receive that are inappropriate or make them feel uncomfortable.
4. Respect resource limits. Students will use the system only for educational and career development activities and quality, independent learning. Educational use will be given priority.

### **User Guidelines**

**The following uses of the Westborough Schools' Internet System are considered unacceptable:**

#### **1. Personal Safety**

- a. Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes home addresses, telephone numbers, etc.
- b. Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online.

#### **2. Illegal Activities**

- a. Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Westborough Network System or the System's Internet Access Provider.
- b. Students will not attempt to disrupt the computer system.
- c. Students will not use the system to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for the purchase or sale of drugs or alcohol, or engaging in criminal activity or threats of any kind.

#### **3. System Security**

- a. Students are responsible for their individual account and should take reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no circumstances should students provide their password to another person.
- b. Students will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- c. Students will not download or install any software or documents without an instructor's permission.

#### **4. Inappropriate Language**

- a. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages and e-mail.
- b. Students will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- c. Students will not post information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption to the educational environment.
- d. Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- e. Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If students are asked by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.
- f. Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

#### **5. Respect for Privacy**

- a. Students will not re-post a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.
- b. Students will not post private information about a person or organization.

#### **6. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

- a. Students will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is defined as taking the idea or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own.
- b. Students will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when someone inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, students should follow the expressed requirements. If students are unsure whether they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner. Copyright law can be very confusing. If students have questions, they should ask a teacher or librarian.
- c. Any material that students obtain from the Internet and include in their own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through email or news sources must also be credited as to sources.

#### **7. Inappropriate Access to Material**

- a. Students will not use the Westborough computer system to access material that is profane, obscene, or pornographic, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature.) A special exception may be made if the purpose of student access is to conduct research approved by a teacher.
- b. If students mistakenly access inappropriate information, they should immediately tell their teacher or another District employee. This will probably protect them against a claim that they have intentionally violated this policy.
- c. If students' parents should instruct them that certain materials are inappropriate for them to access, the District fully expects that students will follow their parents' instructions.

### **Student Rights**

#### **1. Free Speech**

A student's right to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. The Westborough Public School Network System is considered a limited forum similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the District may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons. The District will not restrict a student's speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions that a student is expressing.

#### **2. Search and Seizure**

- a. All data stored or transmitted on school computers may be and will be monitored, and students have no right to privacy with regard to such data.
- b. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the **District system** may lead to discovery that students have violated this Policy or the law.

- c. An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a student has violated this Policy, or the law. The investigation will be reasonable **and** related to the suspected violation.
- 3. Due Process**
- a. The District will cooperate fully with local, **state, or federal** officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the District.
  - b. In the event that there is a claim that a student **has** violated this Policy in their use of the District system, the student will be provided with a written notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to present an explanation before the building principal or administrator.
  - c. If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of student handbook guidelines additional restrictions may be placed on a **student's use** of the computer network.

#### **Limitation of Liability**

1. The District makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the District system will be error-free or without defect.
2. The District will not be responsible for any **damage** a student may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.
3. The District is not responsible for the accuracy **or** quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system.
4. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations resulting from the unauthorized use of the system.

#### **Personal Responsibility**

When students are using the Westborough Public Schools' Computer Network System, they should understand that they leave "electronic footprints." Personal responsibility should **always** be considered. Unlimited use of the Internet is a privilege. Violation may result in denial of access to the network system. Consequences for violations of this policy are building-specific. This information is available upon written request.

**We encourage and invite students to use the computer network to enhance their educational environment at the Westborough Public Schools.**

**Westborough Public Schools  
Internet Acceptable Use Policy  
For Students**

**STUDENT ACCESS AGREEMENT**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the District Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to follow the rules contained in this Policy. I understand that if I violate the rules, my network access can be limited and I may face other disciplinary measures

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Parent or Guardian Section

**The following section must be signed if the student is under eighteen (18) years of age.**

As the parent or guardian of the above-named student, I have read and discussed the Westborough Public School District Internet Acceptable Use Policy with my child.

I hereby release the Westborough Public School District, its School Committee, personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all costs, liabilities or damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the District's system, including, but not limited to claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.

I will instruct my child regarding any restrictions against accessing material in addition to the restrictions set forth in the District Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I will emphasize to my child the importance of following the rules for personal safety.

I give permission to the Westborough Public School District to issue an internet account for my child with the understanding that the District has my consent to monitor my child's communication on the Internet.

I certify that the information contained in this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Required if a student is under age 18)**

Parent or Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

We realize that this Student/Parent Handbook cannot possibly cover all the types of situations that may arise in the course of a school day. In cases that are extreme or have unique circumstances, the school will make a decision that it feels will be the best for all concerned. We sincerely hope that some of the serious actions outlined here will never have to be taken. When school and home cooperate, most problems can be corrected before they reach the stage for serious action. We encourage both students and parents to contact the school at any time concerning questions related to this handbook or any other school matter.