

## Middleton Schools Student Acceptable Internet Use Policy

### Purpose

The Middleton School System is pleased to offer its students access to the school's computer network, including access to the Internet. Access to the school's network will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases and bulletin boards. Students will also be exposed to advertisements of various kinds.

The Middleton Schools believe that there is educational value in the Internet, and recognize the potential support to our curriculum. Through the Internet, one can communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. Many educationally valuable files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its enormous size and resources, the Internet's educational potential is boundless. Because of its broad reach, however, the Internet also contains the potential for misuse. These guidelines are intended to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner.

Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or offensive. While our goal is to provide Internet access to promote educationally supportive materials and sites, students will have access to other information as well. The benefits of student access to the Internet far exceed any disadvantages. Middleton Schools will make every effort to ensure that students use the Internet properly. Students using the Internet are expected to conduct themselves responsibly. Furthermore, these technologies are expensive to purchase, to install and to maintain. As property of the Middleton Schools all technology must be handled carefully so as to benefit all users.

All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, faculty members cannot monitor student use at every moment. Every student is expected to develop individual responsibility for his or her own appropriate use of the Internet.

### Internet Access is a Privilege

For all users, Internet access through the Middleton Public Schools is a privilege, not a right. A student's access may be canceled by school officials if this privilege is misused. Revocation of computer access privileges may be necessary. Inappropriate conduct as applied to Internet access will be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in the Middleton Schools Student Handbook.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that all uses of the Internet are consistent with the educational goals of Middleton Schools.

### **UNACCEPTABLE USES**

All Internet users will be expected to understand that the following uses of the Middleton Schools Internet access are unacceptable:

- Using the Internet for illegal purposes or in support of illegal purposes.
- Posting or divulging ANY private or personal information about yourself or another person (this includes the student's location).

- Attempting to log on through another person's e-mail account or to access another person's files.
- Accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material. This includes the use of obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- Posting chain letters or engaging in sending annoying messages to large numbers of people (spamming).
- Using the school network to retrieve, transmit or make available to others a message that is inconsistent with the educational purposes of the Internet.
- Engaging in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Harassing another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is requested by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.
- Posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
- Using the network in a fashion inconsistent with the directions from teachers and other staff and generally accepted network etiquette.
- Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the taking of material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own.
- Infringing copyrights. Copyright infringement occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces or transmits material that is protected by copyright. For example, most software is protected by copyright and may not be copied without permission of the copyright owner.
- Any use for political or commercial purposes that are not directly related to the educational purposes of Middleton Public Schools.
- Any use that disrupts the educational goals of Middleton Schools.
- Entering a social chat room for any reason.
- Any downloading of large or harmful files.
- Sharing a personal password or account with anyone.
- Downloading freeware, shareware or other software which affects the system software of a computer.
- Disrupting the hard drive set-up of a computer, including changing desktop or hard drive folder names, colors or contents.

### Student Responsibility

Access of material that has been deemed inappropriate for educational use by Middleton Schools' faculty or staff is strictly prohibited. If users encounter such material by accident, they should quit the application immediately. Students should report the incident directly to a teacher. Students will not have the opportunity to simply "surf the Internet or browse among World Wide Web pages. Students will use the Internet for a specific educational purpose during lab time or for a class assignment.

### Access to Student's Files

All student files, including e-mail files and other Internet files and usage may be monitored by faculty for educational and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that these Guidelines are being followed. Also, faculty may be asked to provide

access to student files and records to law enforcement authorities. Students should not assume that the uses of Middleton Schools Internet access will be private.

### Personal Safety

The Internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with students for inappropriate purposes. Middleton Schools cannot screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Students must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging any kind of meetings. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any on-line communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing or otherwise inappropriate.

### System Security and Resource Limits

Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued in order to ensure the security of the Middleton Schools' computer system and to respect its resource limits. These include any downloading guidelines and virus protection procedures that may be issued.

No students should bring a disk from home and utilize it in a school computer without permission from the Technology Staff.

Software installation of any kind, with the exception of that done by the Technology Staff, on school computers will be strictly prohibited.

Students will not be allowed to use the district's computer resources to create their own web page unless it is in conjunction with a class assignment.

### Changes in Policy

Middleton Schools reserves the right to change and amend this policy at any time.

### Disclaimer of Liability

The Middleton Public Schools make no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing. The Middleton Schools will not be responsible for any damages a user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, no-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the Middleton School System's negligence or by the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The Middleton School System specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. All users need to consider the source of any information they obtain, and consider how valid that information may be.

\*\*Pieces of this policy were gleaned, with permission, from the Topsfield Public Schools' Internet Use Policy.