Hickman County Board of Education

	Descriptor Term: **Use of the Internet**	Descriptor Code: **4.406**	Issued Date: **08/05/24**
		Rescinds: **4.406**	Issued: **08/01/22**

The Board supports the right of staff and students to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes that it is incumbent upon staff and students to use this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

Employees

Before any employee is allowed use of the district's Internet or intranet access, the employee shall sign a written agreement, developed by the director/designee that sets out the terms and conditions of such use. Any employee who accesses the district's computer system for any purpose agrees to be bound by the terms of that agreement, even if no signed written agreement is on file.

The director of schools shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate Internet use which shall address the following:

1. Development of the Network and Internet Use Agreement.
2. General rules and ethics of Internet access.
3. Guidelines regarding appropriate instruction and oversight of student Internet use.
4. A uniform signature block for use by all district employees; and
5. Prohibited and illegal activities, including but not limited to the following:[1]
    - Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
    - Using obscene language
    - Harassing, insulting, defaming or attacking others
    - Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
    - Hacking or attempting unauthorized access to any computer
    - Violation of copyright laws
    - Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
    - Intentional misuse of resources
    - Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation)
    - Use of the network for commercial purposes
    - Buying or selling personal items on the Internet

Students

The director of schools shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate Internet use by students. Procedures shall address the following:

1. General rules and ethics of Internet use.
2. Prohibited or illegal activities, including, but not limited to:[1]

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting, defaming or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Hacking or attempting unauthorized access
- Violation of copyright laws
- Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
- Intentional misuse of resources
- Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation)
- Use of the network for commercial purposes
- Buying or selling on the Internet

INTERNET SAFETY MEASURES[2]

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by students to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web
- Safety and security of students when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications
- Preventing unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by students on-line
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding students
- Restricting students' access to materials harmful to them

The director of schools/designee shall establish a process to ensure the district's education technology is not used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

- Utilizing technology that filters, blocks or otherwise prevents internet access (for both students and adults) to material that is obscene, child pornography [3] or harmful to students
- Prohibiting and preventing a use from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are deemed to be harmful to minors;[4]
- Maintaining and securing a usage log
- Monitoring on-line activities of students

The Board shall provide reasonable public notice of, and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate, its Internet safety measures.

A written parental consent shall be required prior to the student being granted access to electronic media involving district technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges and penalties for policy/ procedural violations, must be signed by the parent/legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be executed each year and shall be valid only in the school year in which it was signed unless parent(s) provide written notice that consent is

withdrawn. In order to rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the director of schools with a written request.

Complaints alleging a violation of the internet safety measures shall be submitted to the District Technology Director. All complaints shall be reviewed to determine how to appropriately respond.

E-MAIL

Users with network access shall not utilize district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. All data including e-mail communications stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored. Employees/students have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data. E-mail correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection.[5]

INTERNET SAFETY INSTRUCTION[6]

Students will be given appropriate instruction in internet safety as a part of any instruction utilizing computer resources. The director shall provide adequate in-service instruction on internet safety. Parents and students will be provided with material to raise awareness of the dangers posed by the internet and ways in which the internet may be used safely.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

1. Students are prohibited from accessing social media platforms using district internet except when expressly authorized by a teacher for educational purposes.[7]

2. District staff who have a presence on social networking websites are prohibited from posting data, documents, photographs, or inappropriate information that is likely to create a material and substantial disruption of classroom activity.

3. District staff are prohibited from accessing personal social networking sites on school computers or during school hours except for legitimate instructional purposes.

4. The board discourages district staff from socializing with students on social networking websites. The same relationship, exchange, interaction, information, or behavior that would be unacceptable in a non-technological medium is unacceptable when done through the use of technology.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy or a procedure promulgated under its authority shall be handled in accordance with the existing disciplinary procedures of this District.

VENDOR CONTRACTS[8]

Prior to entering into any contract for the provision of digital or online materials created or marketed for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), the district shall obtain an assurance that the vendor

shall adhere to state law. This determination includes ensuring that the vendor filters, blocks, or otherwise prevents access to pornography or obscenity and verifying that the technology prevents a user from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are harmful to minors.

Legal References

1. TCA 39-14-602
2. 47 USCA § 254 (h)(5)(A) – (C), 254(l); 47 CFR § 54.520(c)(1)(i); 20 USCA § 7131
3. TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(C)(i)
4. TCA 39-17-901; TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(C)(ii)
5. TCA 10-7-512
6. TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(E)
7. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 195
8. TCA 49-1-221(c)

Cross References

Use of Email 1.805
Use of Artificial Intelligence Programs 4.214
School and System Websites 4.407
Controversial Materials 4.801
Student Publications 6.704