Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District

Policy for Staff on Acceptable Use of District Technologies

I. Introduction

Technology is a critical part of the teaching, administrative, communicative, and professional development process of District employees. These administrative guidelines define the rights and responsibilities of both the employee and of the District relative to acceptable use of these technologies.

II. Definition of Technologies

For the purposes of these guidelines, technologies include hardware, software, multimedia devices, the Internet, World Wide Web (WWW), on-line services, e-mail, Internet-related services, District computer networks, telephone, voice mail, and other applicable services or technologies in service now or implemented in the future.

III. Dobbs Ferry School District Rights and Responsibilities

The District has the responsibility for communicating the expectations regarding employee use of technologies and for providing training opportunities so that employees may develop skills necessary for successful and appropriate use of those technologies.

In order to ensure the security of District information resources, including confidential student files, personnel files, and financial files, the District may restrict access to technologies and reserves the right to access electronic files and account information on District owned computers. In particular, the District may access electronic files, including, but not necessarily limited to, employee e-mail and voice mail in order to investigate suspected acts that may be in violation of Board of Education policies or that may be criminal in nature.

There is no reasonable expectation of privacy with regards to use of District-provided technologies. Operational support of the District system may require technical personnel to access and manage employee information. Therefore, information must not be assumed to be private and/or confidential. Examples of operational support might include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Retrieving lost data;

2. Assisting colleagues, with their consent, in performance of their duties;

3. Studying effectiveness of the system;

4. Application of updates or revisions;

5. Recovering from system failures or other emergencies; and

6. Investigate potentially illegal acts or violations of board policies and/or procedures.

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IV. Employee Rights and Responsibilities

Employee use of technologies is provided for the benefit of the employee. In using technologies, the employee will:

1. Respect the rights of privacy of other District personnel and of students;

2. Bear in mind that all use of technologies represents the District and thus reflects on the integrity, ethics, and good name of the District as a public education institution;

3. Apply the same standards of behavior, conduct, and courtesy as are expected in the school, classroom, or other District setting;

4. Comply with all laws, Board policies, regulations and administrative guidelines regarding the use of copyrighted materials;

5. Not seek unauthorized access to school, District, other public, or private computer networks, computers, or electronic files for any purpose; and

6. Comply with any and all related Board, administrative guidelines, and operating procedures relative to acceptable and responsible use.

V. Unacceptable Use

Unacceptable use shall include, but not be limited to, the following.

1. Sharing of passwords or using another's password to log into District systems.

2. Intentionally damaging or defacing District-owned equipment.

3. Use of the school District system to engage in or support any illegal activity or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.

4. Use of the school District system for commercial activities, product advertisements, financial gain, or political lobbying.

5. Use of the school District system to transmit, receive, access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, prurient, obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language, images or other material that is lacking educational merit, socially redeeming value or that is disruptive to the educational process.

6. Use of the school District system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.

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7. Use of the school District system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

8. Any use of the school District system in such a way that would interfere with the efficient operation of the network or disrupt the use of the network by others, (e.g. downloading excessively large files, installing P2P software or e-mailing excessively large documents).

9. Sending of "nuisance" e-mail/chain messages (SPAM) which are not consistent with the Acceptable Use Policy defined above.

10. Attempting to download, run, load, modify, or install programs or software on the network, server, or workstation/computer hard disk or other storage media (such as USB flash drives) without the permission and assistance from the system's administrator. Use of software on the network or workstation is limited to that which has been legally licensed and properly installed.

11. Use of the school District system to download programs, software or files for any use not consistent with the Acceptable Use Policy defined above.

12. The playing of any games during instructional time, whether locally or over the Internet, must be for an educational purpose and must comply with all aspects of this Acceptable Use Policy.

13. Use of the school District system to vandalize, damage or disable the property or data of another person or organization; deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means; tampering with, modifying or attempting to harm, destroy or change the school District system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school District system's security.

14. Attempting to log on as system administrator, or gain unauthorized access to the school District system or any other system through the school District system; attempting to log in through another person's account, or obtain passwords, use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user; attempting to discover passwords or gain access through the use of "hacker" programs or similar activities.

15. Use of the school District system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.

16. Use of the school District system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons (unless for official school business or otherwise authorized) including, but not limited to, addresses,

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telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords.

17. Use of the school District system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, plagiarize or otherwise use another person's property without prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software.

18. Any attempt to bypass or circumvent the District's Internet filtering system through the use of programs either downloaded from the Internet or brought in on portable storage devices (such as USB flash drives), or through other Websites or Web services such as proxies, or through any other means which results in the user's Internet access bypassing, circumventing or otherwise avoiding our Internet filter.

19. Any other violations of accepted network or Internet etiquette.

VI. State and Federal Compliance

State and federal laws may impact or limit the use of technologies. Users of those technologies must be aware of and comply with requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Children Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Except in instances as specifically provided by law, any student records which are made, maintained, or transmitted technologically must be kept confidential.

VII. E-Mail—Etiquette

E-mail is an important form of communication. District e-mail users should check e-mail regularly and respond in a timely manner.

E-Mail users should keep in mind that while e-mail messages may seem informal, they constitute a written form of communication, which may be considered more formal. For this reason e-mail communication should be conducted with the same professionalism and character as face-to-face communication. The following helpful hints may improve the effectiveness of e-mail communication:

1. Briefly describe the purpose of the message in the "Subject" line;

2. Include your name and contact information in a signature for follow-up;

3. Refrain from using all "CAPS" or uppercase in your message which implies shouting;

4. Use the "High Importance" or urgent indicator only if your message requires immediate attention;

5. When out of the office, leave an automatic reply that indicates that you may be unable to read and reply to e-mail in a timely manner; and

6. Use the "CC" (copy) and "BC" (blind copy) functions judiciously, so as to not send messages to recipients unnecessarily.

VIII. Security

Maintaining the security and integrity of the computer network is the responsibility of all users. Users must notify the system administrator of security problems. Users should not demonstrate the problem to other users. Users should report any inappropriate use of the network to an administrator. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other systems may be denied access to the network. Users are expected to comply with any additional restrictions or procedures determined by the systems administrator.

IX. Violations

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy may subject a user to one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school District policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment, or criminal prosecution.

If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school District official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy.

X. Off-campus Access to District Technology

The District may provide staff access to District technology and information by permitting staff to take portal technologies with them or access technology resources over the Internet. The guidelines of this Acceptable Use Policy apply to off-campus activities that use or access District technology resources. In addition, the following provisions apply:

1. All users must take steps to secure all passwords to prevent unauthorized access to accounts.

2. Absolutely no one other than the District employee may use his or her District issued tablet PC or other equipment.

3. Users must understand that at-home technology support is limited.

4. The District will not be responsible for:

   a. Any virus, worm, or other infestation that a home-user may obtain;

   b. Any copyright violations that may be incurred;

      c. Loss or damage to any equipment or software of the home-user.

5. Any and all costs incurred by the District for repairs caused by negligent use **may** be the financial responsibility of the user who has created the problem. Under no circumstances should the user attempt to repair District owned technology themselves or take it to service providers other than the District.

XI. Online Content

All District-sponsored and maintained websites must be for an educational purpose. These websites must be housed on District-owned servers or District-approved external providers. The guidelines of this Acceptable Use Policy apply to all website activities and content. In addition, the following provisions apply:

1. Websites should meet District standards for professionalism, including, but not limited to:

   a. Pages must be in good taste, using District templates when provided;

   b. Pages must contain accurate spelling and grammar;

   c. All links must be functional;

   d. All content must be accurate;

   e. Pages that are available, but not yet populated with content, should be marked with text that indicates they are incomplete.

2. No student information should be posted to the web without checking to be sure that it conforms to the permissions defined by the state of New York and approved by students' parents as indicated in the student information system.

3. All copyrights must be respected with regard to materials used on District websites.

XII. Disclaimer

The Dobbs Ferry School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The District will not be responsible for any damages. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user's errors or omissions. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school District system or the Internet. Users must agree to Indemnify and hold harmless the District for claims arising out of the use of the computer network.

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XIII. Staff Consent

I have read, understand, and agree with the above conditions of Dobbs Ferry School's Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of the regulations may result in suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school District policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment, or criminal prosecution. I agree to Indemnify and hold harmless the Dobbs Ferry Schools for claims arising out of the use of the computer network.

User Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____