Knox County Schools

Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Electronic Media

Use of Electronic Media in the Knox County Schools constitutes the acceptance of these guidelines and the user's assent to abide by the terms of use stated herein.

I. Statement of Affirmation

The Internet is a global electronic highway connecting millions of computers and individuals in the fields of education, business, government, the military and a variety of other organizations. This communication information network is being used in schools to educate, inform, and expand resources in much the same way as periodicals, videos, and computer software programs are used.

Knox County Schools' users will participate in projects using the Internet in a directed manner to support curriculum and research activities. They may participate in distance learning programs, ask questions of and consult with experts, communicate with other users, and locate materials to meet educational needs. Users will also be able to access a variety of information including news resources, electronic discussion groups, information databases, the holdings of libraries worldwide, and electronic mail.

The State of Tennessee and the Knox County Board of Education believe that the benefits of having access to the Internet are invaluable for both educators and students. Among the vast resources on the Internet are some materials that are not suitable for viewing in a school environment. It is not appropriate to locate material that is illegal, defamatory, or offensive. Such conduct will lead to the immediate loss of Internet access and may lead to other disciplinary actions.

Users are expected to understand and abide by the guidelines and behaviors set forth by the Knox County Board of Education in its *Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Electronic Media*. The Board makes no warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the use of the Internet. The Board shall accept no liability or legal responsibility for any damage which may arise from the use of the Internet in violation of these guidelines.

II. Rights and Responsibilities of Users

All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the mission statement of Knox County Schools. For educational purposes, users have specific rights and responsibilities which include, but are not limited to the following.

Users can
- examine and use interactive electronic formats.
- examine a broad range of opinions, ideas, and information in the educational process.
- locate, use and exchange information on the Internet.
- retain ownership of their own intellectual works as users of the Internet, consistent with the policies of the Knox County Board of Education.

Users cannot
- use the network for personal commercial or for-profit purposes.
- participate in harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other inappropriate behaviors.
- use the network to access obscene or pornographic material.
- use the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts.
- damage computer(s), computer systems or computer networks.
- invade the privacy of other network users.
- gain unauthorized access to computer networks, resources or materials.

III. Network Etiquette

Network users are expected to abide by accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include but are not limited to the following.
- Do not reveal your own personal address or phone number or those of other students or colleagues.
- Be polite. Use appropriate language. Do not become abusive in your messages to others. Never use a computer to harm other people. Show consideration and respect for others at all times.
- Do not use a computer to steal. Do not copy software for which you have not paid, use computer resources without authorization, or plagiarize the intellectual property of others.
- Be mindful of the rights of other network users. Do not violate the privacy of other users.
- Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its operation or that would interfere with another user's computer work.
- Abide by the policies and procedures of each network accessed.
- Keep your password private.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communication, a joke may be viewed as criticism.
- Focus on one subject per message.
- Make your subject line as descriptive, yet as short, as possible.
- Keep paragraphs and messages short and to the point.
- Cite all quotes, references, and sources.
- When including a signature at the end of e-mail messages, limit it to four lines.
- Use capital letters only to highlight a word or identify titles or headings. Using all capitals for an entire message has the same effect as verbally shouting.
- Always think about the social consequences of what you do on the network.