

NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Employee Acceptable Use Policy and Rules for Information Technology Resources

General Policy

Newton Public Schools provides school staff with information technology resources such as computers, software, networks, Internet access, E-mail and telephones (hereafter "school information technology") to support the educational mission of Newton Public Schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff.

Newton Public Schools anticipates that access to information technology will help staff share effective practices and lessons throughout the district, allow staff to stay abreast of new trends in education and enable staff to easily communicate with students, parents, and colleagues. School information technology is not intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose unrelated to school purposes.

This Acceptable Use Policy and the accompanying rules have been developed to ensure that school staff use school information technology in a responsible and legal manner. Acceptable Use shows respect for the use of a shared resource, software and intellectual property rights, ownership of information and system security. An employee's use of school information technology that is contrary to this Policy or rules is prohibited.

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy and the accompanying rules. The Superintendent is authorized to develop additional administrative procedures and/or rules governing use of school information technology consistent with this Policy and accompanying rules. The Superintendent may delegate specific responsibilities to the Director of Information Technology for Newton Public Schools, the building principals, or others, as he/she deems appropriate.

Rules

The following rules govern employee use of school information technology. These rules provide general guidelines for Acceptable Use and examples of expressly prohibited uses. However, the rules do not attempt to state all acceptable or prohibited activities. Employees who have questions regarding whether a particular use or activity is acceptable should seek guidance from the Director of Information Technology.

Each employee authorized to access school information technology is required to sign an acknowledgement form stating that they have read this Policy and the accompanying rules. The acknowledgement form will be retained in the employee's personnel file. Any employee who violates this Policy or rules governing use of school information technology may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Illegal use of school information technology will be referred to law enforcement authorities.

A. Access to Computers, Networks, Internet, E-mail and Telephone Services

The level of access that employees have to school information technology is based upon specific employee job requirements and need. Access to school information technology is provided to the employee as a privilege, and not a right. This access is provided to current employees. Upon separation from the Newton Public Schools, E-mail accounts are deleted within a week from the date of separation.

Employees are to utilize school information technology only for purposes related to the schools and the performance of their jobs. Incidental personal use of school information technology is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, system operations or other system users. "Incidental personal use" is defined as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications. Any personal use by employees must comply with this Policy and rules.

B. Acceptable Use

School information technology shall be used in a manner consistent with Newton Public Schools' educational mission and which shows respect for the use of a shared resource, software and intellectual property rights, ownership of information and system security. Expectations for professional behavior and communication apply to use of school information technology. An employee's use of school information technology that is contrary to this Policy or rules is unacceptable and prohibited.

C. Prohibited Use

Each employee is responsible for his/her actions involving school information technology and for his/her computer files, passwords, and accounts. General examples of unacceptable uses of school information technology that are expressly prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Any use that violates any federal, state or local law or regulation, including copyright laws, or violates a School Committee policy;
2. Any use to harass, discriminate, threaten, defame, demean, or intimidate;
3. Any use involving materials or language that is obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive, vulgar or profane;
4. Any use for private financial gain, advertising, or solicitation purposes;
5. Any use to proselytize or advocate the views of an individual or non-school sponsored organization, including but not limited to, political or religious interests;
6. Fund-raising for any non-school sponsored purpose, whether profit or not-for-profit;
7. Providing school E-mail addresses or telephone numbers to outside parties whose intent is to communicate with school employees, students and/or their families for non-school purposes;
8. Obtaining confidential information about student or employees for non-school related activities, or sharing confidential information about students or employees for non-school related activities;

9. Any communication that represents an employee's personal views as those of Newton Public Schools or that could be misinterpreted as such;
10. Downloading or loading software or applications without permission from the Director of Information Technology;
11. Opening or forwarding any E-mail attachments from unknown sources;
12. Sending mass E-mails to school users or outside parties for school or non-school purposes without the permission of the Director of Information Technology;
13. Participating in any type of use which would cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
14. Any misuse or disruption of school information technology, including intentional physical misuse or damage, or any breach or attempt to breach the security features of school information technology;
15. Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's pass-word, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over school information technology;
16. Accessing or attempting to access unauthorized sites on the Internet;
17. Failing to report a breach of school information technology security to the Director of Information Technology;
18. Any unauthorized attempt to modify, delete, erase, or otherwise conceal any information that is stored on school information technology, including someone else's work or data, and any attempt to modify, delete, erase, or otherwise conceal any information that shows a violation of this Policy or rules;
19. Using school information technology resources after access has been denied or revoked; and
20. Any communication that violates generally accepted rules of E-mail or computer etiquette and/or professional conduct.

Employees who are uncertain as to whether particular activities are acceptable should seek further guidance from his/her building principal or the Director of Information Technology.

D. First Class Folders

The First Class E-mail system enables staff members to create folders to facilitate communication on specific educational topics of interest. To be created and maintained, each folder must have a moderator. The role of the moderator is to provide access to the folder by interested staff members and to moderate the communication in the folder to be sure that all of the folder members adhere to the topic for which the folder was created. Any folder that does not have a moderator is subject to cancellation. Further, as a service to the staff, the Information Exchange Folder is provided as a means for staff members to share more general information. Any information not specifically related to school/educational issues is to be limited to this folder. Topic areas in the Information Exchange Folder are *The Want Ad*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Dining Around*, *Cooking and Recipes*, *Green Thumb*, *Sports*, and *Lost and Found*. Postings in the Information Exchange Folder must comply with this Policy and rules and postings that violate this Policy and rules may be removed. All postings will be removed after sixty (60) days.

E. No Expectation of Privacy

Newton Public Schools retains control, custody, and supervision of all school information technology owned, leased or paid for by it. Newton Public Schools reserves the right to monitor all computer, Internet, E-mail and telephone activity by employees and other system users. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of school information

technology, including E-mail messages and stored files, regardless of whether such use is for school purposes or incidental personal use.

F. Confidentiality of Information

Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential. Please comply with the School Committee's *Employee Confidentiality Policy*.

G. Staff Responsibilities to Students

Teachers, staff members, and volunteers who utilize school information technology for instructional purposes with students have a duty to supervise such use. Teachers, staff members, and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the *Internet, E-Mail, and Computer Network Internet Safety Policy for Students of the Newton Public Schools* and to enforce such Policy. When, in the course of their duties, employees/volunteers become aware of student violations, they are expected to stop the activity and inform the building principal.

H. Compensation for Losses, Costs, and/or Damages

The employee shall be responsible for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by Newton Public Schools related to violations of this Policy or rules governing employee use of school information technology.

I. Responsibility for Laptops Issued to Specific Teachers

The teacher to whom a laptop is issued is responsible for the laptop at all times in school and outside of school. There should be no expectation that stolen or damaged laptops will be replaced. Only software and shareware with the appropriate licenses owned by the Newton Public Schools can be installed in the laptops.

J. Responsibility for Unauthorized Charges, Costs, or Illegal Use

Newton Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by employees, including but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

K. Disclaimer on Liability

Newton Public Schools assumes no responsibility for any loss or corruption of data resulting from the use of school information technology.