

Electronic Information Resources Policy

Electronic information resources, such as local area computer networks, CD-ROMs, software programs, and the Internet, may be used in the schools to educate and to inform. The District's connection to the Internet will provide access to the local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration opportunities, which are vital to intellectual inquiry in our schools. Access to the Internet will provide students and staff with electronic mail ("e-mail") communication; information and news services, public domain software and shareware of all types; and connections to many libraries, companies, agencies, and businesses.

On a global information network, such as the Internet, however, it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial or potentially inappropriate materials or to predict with certainty what information the user might locate. The availability of such electronic information does not imply endorsement by the Board of Education of its content or the use of such information by students and staff. It is the responsibility, therefore, of students, parents, and staff to learn and abide by this Electronic Information Resources Policy to ensure that the access to electronic information resources provided by the District is undertaken for educational and research purposes only, and is not abused. The Board will educate minor students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.

The District shall take the steps, such as using filtering programs, access controls, and active supervision by staff, to monitor and/or restrict access to the electronic information resources. Active supervision by staff means that staff is present when students are using the electronic resources, and actively promoting the Responsible Use Standards.

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem, you must notify a system administrator or the District's Coordinator of Technology. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Accounts and passwords are to be used only by the individual who has been assigned that code. Attempts to log on to the Internet or District Network, as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

Internet Safety

The Administration will take measures: to assure the safety and security of students when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; to prohibit unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors

online; to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students; and to restrict students' access to online materials harmful to minors including obscene materials and child pornography.

Search and Seizure

1. System users have a limited privacy expectation regarding the content of their personal files on the District system.
2. District employees should be aware that their personal files are discoverable under state public record.
3. An individual search will be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or the disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be reasonable in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.
4. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that the user had or is violating the District Acceptable Use Policy, the disciplinary code, or the law.

Right of Access and Review

All material, which is electronically stored on the District's computers, is the property of the Shelton School District. The Board retains the right to access, review, edit, and delete all user files and any materials stored on any system provided by the District. This right of access and review includes e-mail.

Training and Education

All staff member with access to electronic information resources shall be trained in the proper use of these resources prior to accessing and using these resources and prior to instructing others in their access and use.

All students with access to electronic information resources shall be taught to evaluate the appropriateness of these resources, and the use them responsibly to meet the students' educational and research goals. This training shall include information regarding responsible use of the network and the use of copyrighted and licensed materials.

Copyright and Plagiarism

1. District policies on copyright will govern the use of materials accessed through the District system. Because the extent of the copyright protection of certain works found on the Internet is unclear, employees will make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work if their use of the material has the potential of being considered an infringement. Teacher will instruct students to respect copyright and to request permission when appropriate.
2. District policies on plagiarism will govern use of material accessed through the District system. Teachers will instruct students in appropriate research and citation practices.

Academic Freedom, Selection of Materials, Student Right to Free Speech

1. Board policies on Academic Freedom and Free Speech will govern the use of the Internet.

2. When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will select material that is appropriate in light of the age of the students and that is relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will preview the material and sites they require or recommend students access to determine the appropriateness of the material contained on or accessed through the site. Teachers will provide guidelines and lists of resources to assist their students in channeling their research activities effectively and properly. Teachers will assist their students in developing the skills to ascertain the truthfulness of information, distinguish fact from opinion, and engage in discussions about controversial issues while demonstration tolerance and respect for those who hold divergent views.

Software

1. Users are responsible to take precautions to prevent viruses on Shelton Public Schools' equipment.
2. Coordinate of Technology must pre-approve the installation of any software on District computers in writing.
3. District staff must perform the installation of approved software only. Students may not install software on district's hardware or network.
4. Only legally licensed copies of software will be installed on district computers.
5. Only district provided software will be installed on district computers.

District Web Site

1. District Web Site. The District will maintain its Web site, and will continue to develop Web pages that present information about the District. The Director of Technology, or his/her appointee is responsible for maintaining the District Web sites.
2. School or Class Web Pages. Schools and classes may establish Web pages that present information about the school or class activities. The building principal will designate an individual to manage the Web site. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class site. These sites may feature examples of student work. As a public facing site it is the responsibility of the designated teacher to ensure that all public facing content and work is posted without identification of student.
3. Private Class/Teacher Pages. Teachers and staff may create internet facing sites that have been secured based on the districts username and password policy. These sites are intended to provide Web 2.0 content and access to the students for the purposes of collaborative learning, group discussion, and community knowledge transfer. These sites may feature blogs, discussion boards or pod casts. It is the responsibility of the designated teacher to secure these sites such that access is limited to applicable Shelton Public Schools staff and students.

Notice to Parents, Students & Staff

The Superintendent shall distribute a copy of this policy to all parents, students, and staff.

Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement

The Superintendent shall develop an Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement, which shall be signed by all student users and their parents, as a precondition to use of the District's electronic information resources. As with all policies of the Shelton Board of Education, this Electronic Information Resources Access Agreement shall be adhered to by the staff as a condition of employment.

Lost, Damaged, or Unavailable Materials

The Board makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing. The Board shall not be liable for damages suffered by the user either from the user's or the Board's errors or omissions. Such damage may include, but is not limited to, loss of data resulting from delay, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions. Use of information obtained from these resources is made at the user's risk, and the Board specifically denies any liability for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through these resources.

Guidelines for General Use

It is important to recognize that with increased access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of controversial material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. Further, the school district recognizes the importance of each individual's judgment regarding appropriate conduct in maintaining a quality resource system. While this policy does not attempt to articulate all required or prescribed behavior, it does seek to assist in such judgment by providing the following guidelines

1. The purpose of Shelton's Public School District's Network is to promote the exchange of information to further education and research and is consistent with the mission of the Shelton Public School District.
2. Neither Shelton's instructional network nor Internet access is to be used for commercial business, political or religious advocacy purposes.
3. Using the district system to purchase products or services is prohibited. The district will not be held responsible for the financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of the system.
4. Any use of either network for illegal activity is prohibited.
5. Use of Shelton's Internet to access obscene or pornographic material is prohibited.
6. Criminal speech in the course of committing a crime such as, but not limited to, threats to the President, instruction on breaking into computer systems, pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities are prohibited.
7. Sending material critical of school administration, teachers, staff, students, or anyone associated with the district is prohibited.
8. Harassment or ridicule of individuals is prohibited.
9. Inappropriate language including obscenities, profanities, lewdness, vulgarities, rudeness, disrespectful, threatening, inflammatory, harassment, personal attacks including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks, false or defamatory material about a person or organization is prohibited.
10. Sending materials offensive or objectionable to recipients is prohibited.

11. Sending information that if acted upon could cause damage, present a danger or cause disruption is prohibited.
12. Harassing network users or infiltrating computer systems, and /or damaging of software components is prohibited.
13. Users of the computer system will not reveal passwords, personal address, phone numbers, personal information about themselves, other students or colleagues.
14. The use of personal photographs scanned into correspondence is prohibited.
15. Spamming, or sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people is prohibited.
16. Any use of the Shelton Internet link that accesses outside resources must conform to their policies and regulations.
17. Subscriptions to Listservs, new groups, bulletin boards and any other on-line services will be subject to review and approval by district staff.
18. Deliberate misuse of the network and its peripherals will be considered an act of vandalism, and subject user to disciplinary action, and hold user financially responsible for any damage incurred.
19. No student, volunteer or district employee shall make any unauthorized entry or alteration of any document, either paper or electronic, that was not created by said individual.
20. Student users will be supervised when accessing the Internet.
21. Any user violating these rules, applicable state and federal laws or posted classroom/district rules is subject to loss of Internet privileges and other disciplinary actions.
22. Student users must have permission before using the Internet and must follow instructions of district guidelines. These guidelines and permission slips will be issued at the beginning of each school year, and to all new students who register after school begins.
23. The district will not be held liable for harm or damage done by a user to another person or organization through the inappropriate use of the system.

Penalties for Violations

The use of the District's electronic information resources is a privilege – not a right – and inappropriate use shall result in disciplinary action.

Any user of electronic information resources who is found to have violated any provision of this policy shall also be subject to having his or her privilege to access and use of electronic information resources revoked, and shall be required to compensate the District or others for damage caused by his or her violation of this policy.

Any user of electronic information resources who is found to have violated any provision of this policy shall also be subject to prosecution if the inappropriate use of these resources is a violation of local, state, and federal laws.

Legal References:

Children's Internet Protection Act, Pub. L. 106-554, codified at 47 U.S.C. §254(h)
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182b; 53a-183; 53a-250
Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 6777
Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Pub. Law 110-385, codified at 47
U.S.C. § 254 (h)(5)(B)(iii).

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Shelton Public Schools