

DENISON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Computers and Network Systems

The Ethics of General Technology Use

Computers and network systems put enormous power at the fingertips of all users; however, they also place responsibilities on all users. Ethical questions surrounding computers and the networks are no different than those in other spheres of our lives. DISD staff members shall report to the principal any incidents of unauthorized or unacceptable access or use, including names of those responsible, if known.

The following ten statements of computer ethics are to be adhered to by all technology users in DISD, including students and district employees, regardless of the provider of the device:

1. All files and programs belong to someone. Users shall not erase, copy, rename, or make unusable anyone else's files or programs.
2. Users shall not authorize anyone else to use their name, login, password, or files for any reason.
3. Users shall not use DISD computer or network systems for any purposes other than legitimate learning purposes. Users also must not use a computer for unlawful purposes, such as the illegal copying, installation, or storage of software.
4. Users shall not attempt to discover another user's password, either at DISD locally or at a remote location.
5. Users shall not copy, change, or transfer any software and/or files provided by DISD, teachers, or another student without permission from a DISD administrator/designee.
6. Users shall not illegally copy copyrighted software provided by DISD, an instructor, or any other source. Note that, except as noted in the Copyright Notice at the end of any software document, it is generally illegal to copy any software which has a copyright. The use of illegally copied software is considered a criminal offense and is subject to criminal prosecution.
7. Users shall not intentionally write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computers memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called a bug, virus, worm, or some similar name.
8. Users shall not deliberately use the computer to annoy or harass others with unacceptable language, images, or threats. Users also shall not deliberately access any unacceptable, obscene, or objectionable information, language, or images.
9. Users shall not intentionally damage the system, intentionally damage information not belonging to them, intentionally misuse system sources, or allow others to misuse system resources.
10. Users shall not tamper with the computers, networks, printers or other associated equipment except as directed by the teacher.

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Computer Network System Rules

The purpose of installing Local Area Networks (LANs), setting up the Wide Area Network (WAN), and providing access to the Internet is to advance and promote education in the Denison Independent School District. The WAN with its access to Internet is intended to assist in the collaboration and exchange of information between and among schools, offices, parents, regional education service centers, and other world-wide educational entities.

1. DISD expects users to have consideration for the personal and material rights of others. In other words, bullying/harassing others, destroying property, and stealing from others are totally unacceptable behaviors.

Obtaining a password or rights to another's directory or electronic messages on the network is considered a form of theft just as real as using a stolen key to enter someone's home. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is comparable to entering an unlocked room and stealing, reading a personal letter, or destroying their property.

Another issue is the use and transfer of stolen (some call it 'pirated') software. Commercial software is copyrighted and each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software. There is no justification for the use of illegally obtained software. Students may expect this to be handled as a disciplinary matter, much as shoplifting from a local store might be handled.

2. DISD expects users to be honest with others in what they do and say.

While most important issues are addressed by the first rule, it is worth remembering that honesty in dealing with each other is one of the most important rules of conduct. Writing an electronic message masquerading as another is a most offensive form of dishonesty and will be treated accordingly.

3. DISD provided email is for educational use only.

The software and hardware that provides email has been publicly funded. For that reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. The content of any communication of this type would be governed by the Open Records Act.

Students are not issued individual email accounts.

Do not send messages to the entire staff when only a small group of people actually need to receive the message. In addition, do not forward messages that have no educational or professional use.

4. DISD will monitor the use of the network.

The Electronic Communications Privacy Act makes it clear that the DISD-provided computer system is the property of DISD. DISD has the legal right to monitor all employee computer

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activity, transmissions and content-including incoming, outgoing and internal email messages, as well as web surfing, downloads, uploads and other computer files.

Teachers are responsible for monitoring students for inappropriate computer system use.

General Guidelines for the Use of the Internet

DISD faculty and students have access to the Internet, including electronic messages (faculty only), and the ability to access computers at other locations. The Internet is intended as an educational resource to enrich school experiences for all DISD faculties and students. In order for users to benefit from this resource, it is necessary that they learn acceptable use of the Internet. All students who use the Internet must be educated on appropriate uses and acceptable Internet behavior. This instruction will include appropriate behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response. Campuses will keep documentation on this training as required by CIPA rules. DISD staff will hold students accountable for their behavior when accessing the Internet.

When using the Internet through DISD's connection, users are representatives of DISD. In that role, users must conduct themselves in a way that is not hurtful to others or their property. It is not permissible to post harassing messages on public spaces or in private electronic mail. It is not permissible to use DISD connection to attempt to circumvent the security provisions of another computer on the Internet. It is not permissible to send messages under the name of another or anonymously. It is not permissible to access or use any unacceptable, obscene, or objectionable information language, or images. In short, all of the restrictions described in the Ten Statements of Technology Ethics and the Computer/Network Rules also apply to the use of computers and electronic messages across the Internet. Violations of these rules may result in suspension of network privileges.

There are risks involved as well. Among the millions of Internet users, just as among the millions who live in a city, there are people who are dangerous. There have been cases of criminals who have identified potential victims using the Internet and then proceeded to approach and injure them. Therefore, DISD strongly suggests that all Internet users not give out personal information to other users on bulletin boards, chat boards, or other systems, just as one would not give out his/her address to a stranger on the street. Many benefits can be gained through the Internet. Faculty and students have access to great resources and information, and will advance their own education. Guidelines concerning Internet access are intended to assist in maintaining and improving on this record.

All of the above policies and procedures for acceptable use of computers and network systems are intended to make the computers and network systems more reliable and consistent for the users who depend upon them daily. They are also intended to minimize the burden of administrating the network system, so that more time can be spent enhancing services. If there is any doubt concerning the acceptable use of computers and the network system, contact the DISD Technology Department at (903) 462-7001.

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If there are genuine needs that cannot be met by following these rules, please let a DISD administrator know.

Internet Safety

It is the policy of DISD to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via the Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and USC 254(h)].

To the extent practical, technology protection measures, including an Internet filter, will be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information. Blocking, as required by the CIPA, shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. This software will also be used to monitor Internet use.

To the extent practical, steps will be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the DISD online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. Prevention of inappropriate network usage, as required by the CIPA, includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

It is the responsibility of all members of the DISD staff to supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act. Procedures for disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures are the responsibility of Director of Technology.

Social Networking and Web 2.0 Technologies

Social Networking is considered to be any website that allows users to publish digital information instantly or as a result of being a 'member' of a service application. Generally this activity is characterized by concepts such as 'forums,' 'blogs,' 'wikis' or social activities such as Twitter and Facebook. As a general guide, any website that allows the publishing of information which is not immediately removed once the user leaves the site and/or any website that requires the student to be a 'member' and have a password to access it will be considered a social networking website. Our aim is to allow students to participate in read/write web, Web 2.0 or Classroom 2.0 style publishing, responsibly, transparently and safely.

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Unacceptable Use:

1. Publishing information to social networking sites that allow the publishing of text, audio, video and images must be for educational purposes only and clearly identified as a requisite of the classroom activity
2. Accessing sites not explicitly referenced by staff for the purpose of publishing to the Internet
3. Accessing [www.Twitter.com](http://www.Twitter.com) and [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) at any time.
4. Linking unacceptable websites to the District or staff websites is prohibited
5. Signing onto any web based service requiring a student to provide personal details in exchange for a user name and password for further access not explicitly authorized by the teacher
6. Failing to provide username/password to any space that they are using to their teacher on demand
7. Posting video or audio to public spaces, characterized by YouTube et al., either as a 'member' of the service without authorization from administration or anonymously
8. Altering, deleting or moving any digital materials produced on any 'social space' without permission of the owner
9. 'Commenting via text' on other people's work appearing on any space with public access without permission of the teacher
10. Posting, downloading or plagiarizing any work posted to social spaces as reference materials (cheating), not limited to, but including 'Bored of Studies' and 'Spark Notes'
11. Publishing digital information supplied by staff to students in the course of their studies in any form to the public domain without permission of the author. Materials are subject to copyright and remain the property of the school at all times.
12. Using prohibited websites to conduct school business

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Consequences

Violation of DISD's policies and procedures concerning the use of computers and the network system will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of DISD life. Any or all of the following consequences may be employed:

1. Loss of computer privileges/Internet access, with length of time to be determined by the building administrator.
2. Any campus based disciplinary consequences, including suspension from school as deemed appropriate by the building administrator.
3. Expulsion may be considered in flagrant violations that blatantly corrupt the educational value of computers or the Internet, or in instances when students have used the DISD Internet access to violate the law or to compromise another computer network. Any violations that fall into this category must first be reviewed by a committee chaired by the DISD Technology Director.