

Consistent with policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use, and in an effort to further the school district's objectives, the board of education encourages the use of the Internet as a means of providing accessible, accurate and timely information for employees, students, parents and others in the larger community. The Internet affords the school district the opportunity to communicate with its communities by posting pertinent district and school information on-line. The school district has established its district website on-line at <http://www.mgsd.k12.nc.us/>. The school district website is the official website of the school district. In addition to this website, individual schools and departments may create district-related school websites. This policy provides the standards that must be followed for development of all district-related websites. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the removal of a web page or website from the Internet.

A. DISTRICT-RELATED WEBSITE

A "district-related website" is any Internet website that is established in one of the following ways:

- a. by school district employees or students on behalf of the district;
- b. by any school within the district;
- c. by any school-sponsored club or organization within the district; or
- d. by students as part of an educational assignment.

Only those websites that are created pursuant to this policy are considered district-related websites. The board does not endorse and is not responsible for websites created by employees, students or others outside of the standards and guidelines of this policy. Students or employees who create personal websites that result in a substantial and material disruption to the school environment may be subject to disciplinary action.

B. STANDARDS FOR WEB PAGE DEVELOPMENT**1. Non-Public or Closed Forums for Expression**

All district-related websites are "non-public" or "closed" forums for expression. This means that the district has control over information on such websites and is not required to allow students, teachers or others to place material on district-related websites. The purpose of district-related websites is to disseminate curriculum-related information; to present the public with information about the district, its schools and its programs; and to provide the community with each school or department's mission, contact information, activities, organizational format and instructional program. District-related websites are analogous to

newsletters from the administration or the individual school. District-related websites are not analogous to a student newspaper or a non-school publication.

2. Administration and Editorial Control

All employees responsible for creating, developing, maintaining, editing or approving a district-related website shall act legally, responsibly and ethically in providing educational resources and information to support the mission and curriculum of the school district. Such persons shall abide by the generally accepted rules of website etiquette, board policy and regulations established by the superintendent.

a. Superintendent Final Authority

The superintendent or designee may delegate authority to place information on a district-related website; however, the superintendent has the final authority to approve or disapprove any information in whatever form on any such district-related websites.

b. School District Official Website

The superintendent or designee has editorial control and responsibility for the content of the school district official website. The superintendent shall appoint a staff member to serve as the web manager/editor of the district website.

c. Individual School Websites

Each school will be provided with a web address, web design software and disk space on the district server. All district-related websites will be housed on the district web server. Each principal has editorial control and responsibility for the content of his or her individual school's official website, subject to review of the superintendent or designee. The principal may appoint a staff member to serve as the web manager of the school's website and a website committee to advise the web manager and principal regarding the content of the school's website. Individual school websites must comply with the additional guidelines provided below.

d. Teacher and Student Websites

Each teacher has editorial control over and responsibility for the content of his or her official website and for the content of his or her students' authorized websites, subject to review by the principal, the superintendent and the board. With the knowledge and written consent of a student's parent or guardian, a teacher may allow a student to create a website within or linked from a school's or teacher's website only for the

following instructional purposes: (1) to teach a student how to create or maintain a website or (2) to facilitate a student's work on school assignments or research projects. No student pages may be posted or made accessible to the general public until approved by the principal or designee.

e. Personal Websites

The school district is not responsible for personal websites or web pages created or maintained by students, employees, parents, groups or organizations. Personal websites or web pages are not considered district-related websites or web pages and are not covered by the provisions of this policy. (For further information regarding personal websites, see policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media, and section F of policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.)

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites or web pages that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school district or individual school names, logos or trademarks without permission.

3. Website Appearance and Evaluation

Web page content must be kept current and be maintained regularly. All district-related websites must include the name of the web page author, the date produced or revised, and the e-mail address of the author. The superintendent or designee (for the official district website) or the principal or designee (for individual school websites) must regularly review, proof and evaluate all district-related websites.

4. Copyright Laws

No information or graphics may be posted on websites in violation of any copyright laws or policy 3230/7330, Copyright Compliance. Copyright permission must be obtained for the use of any copyrighted material unless use is permitted as "fair use" under federal law. The superintendent or designee and each principal or designee is responsible for maintaining copies of permission granted for the use of copyrighted material.

5. Links

a. Internal Links

Each page of a district-related website must include a reference and hyperlink to the school district official website home page. In addition, all district-related websites must include a link to this policy and to policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.

b. External Links

The superintendent and designee have editorial control over and responsibility for the linking of a district-related website to other sites on the Internet that are appropriate to the mission of the school district. Links to external sites (including externally hosted teacher classroom sites) must be approved by the principal. If required, web managers must obtain permission from external websites before links are established from any district-related website to external websites. To the extent possible, school personnel shall determine the extent to which a secondary site is linked to other sites on the Internet and whether such sites are appropriate for access through the school district websites. Web managers shall periodically check external links for accuracy and appropriateness of content. School employees must report any inappropriate links to the web manager.

Since the school district cannot control the content of other sites on the Internet and their linkages, the following disclaimer statement must be inserted in a prominent position on the official district website, on each school's web page and on other district-related websites that contain links to other websites or web pages that are not district-related websites:

The school district retains control over what links will be placed on district-related websites; however, the linked sites themselves are not under the control of the school district, its agents or its employees. The school district is not responsible for the contents of any linked site, any link contained in a linked site, or any changes or updates to such sites. The school district provides links as a convenience, and the inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement of the site by the school district. The school district reserves the right to remove or restrict any links.

c. Links to Personal Pages

School websites or web pages may not contain links to personal web pages of students or employees or lists of personal web pages.

6. Behavior Standards

When using the Internet, employees and students are responsible for understanding and complying with board policies and administrative regulations, including policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use; student behavior policies in the 4300 series; and policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities.

7. Accessibility of Website

The web manager/editor, in consultation with the technology director, shall ensure that the school district website meets required standards to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.

C. GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL WEBSITES

Each school may promote itself by publishing an official school web page on the Internet only via the official school district website. In addition to the standards above, the following standards apply to individual school websites.

1. The content of school web pages must be approved by the school principal.
2. The safety of students and employees must be considered when constructing school web pages. To protect the safety of students and employees, the following precautions must be taken:
 - a. home addresses or telephone numbers will not be listed;
 - b. student e-mail addresses will not be listed;
 - c. photographs of students and student work will be used only with appropriate parental permission and/or as approved for release as directory information under policy 4700, Student Records, and will include only the student's first name, with no other information about the student.

The principal or designee is responsible for maintaining records of permission granted for the release of information. The principal should implement other safety precautions, as necessary, to be followed when constructing web pages.

3. To protect a student's rights in his or her intellectual property, if a school or teacher publishes a student's work, a disclaimer should be provided indicating the terms of redistribution or reuse.
4. Schools must provide contact information and other general information about the school on the school website, including the school's name, phone number, fax number, grade levels and address, the principal's name and the e-mail addresses of the school administrative team.
5. Graphics used on school websites must be appropriate to the school and should be of a size that will download quickly into a web browser.
6. Schools must keep information presented on their school's web page current, accurate and grammatically correct.
7. The principal or designee must approve all revisions and additions to the school website.

8. Failure to comply with these guidelines or the standards of this policy, as determined by the superintendent or designee, may result in the removal of a school's web page from the Internet.

Legal References: U.S. Const. Amend. I; Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; 17 U.S.C. 101 *et seq.*; G.S. 115C-325(e)

Cross References: Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Technology Responsible Use (policy 3225/4312/7320), Copyright Compliance (policy 3230/7330), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Student Records (policy 4700), Public Records – Retention, Release and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335), Personnel Files (policy 7820)

Adopted: _____, 2012