

## Internet User Agreement

- ❑ Please complete ***EITHER*** Option 2 on this page ***OR*** Option 1 on the reverse side and return the form to school with your child.
- ❑ An option must be signed by student and parent/guardian if student is under 18 years of age.
- ❑ If a parent/guardian does not complete and return this form, we will consider this a negative response, and will not give the student individual access to the Internet, E-mail, or any other form of Internet communication.

### Option 2

As the parent/guardian of the minor student signing below, *I do not want* my child to have individual access to the Internet, E-mail, or any other form of Internet communication. I do understand that there will be occasions when a teacher will give the entire class access to the Internet for a guided lesson related to the curriculum currently being taught. However, my child should not have individual access.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

x \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my parent/guardian has not given permission for me to have individual access to the Internet, E-mail or any other form of Internet communication. However, as a user of the White Plains City School District's computer network, I have read the brochure and the Summary of Activities Not Permitted, and I will not take part in any of them. I hereby agree to comply with the stated rules while honoring all relevant laws and restrictions. I understand that violations of the Board of Education's policy may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(See other side for option 1)

## Introduction

Gateway to the Future, the White Plains Public Schools' multi-million dollar Technology Plan, places the District far ahead of most other school systems in the nation in the area of computer technology. In fact, New York State Commissioner of Education Richard Mills has applauded District educators for developing a technology program that is "driven by high expectations, includes a huge commitment to staff training and is linked to the school and city libraries."

We have written this brochure for families who have a computer and Internet access at home, as well as for those who do not. It includes definitions of some of the most common network and Internet terminology, and attempts to give families a balanced view of the advantages and disadvantages of this powerful yet controversial tool. We hope to arm families with information about this new field of communication, and to provide guidelines and standards for students to follow for a safe journey through this world.

### The White Plains Network

All of the District's schools and offices are connected by a network through fiber optic wiring installed by the City of White Plains. The latest and best computer software is located on the network for student and staff use. Through the network, students can access the vast resources of the Internet and explore thousands of constantly growing websites, libraries, databases and bulletin boards where they can learn about virtually any topic. In addition, students on the internet will be able to communicate, through E-mail, video conferencing, and other forms of Internet communication to individuals in a class clear across town, the nation, or, for that matter, the world.

### What's in it for Kids?

What exactly does this all mean to your daughter in fourth grade or to your eighth-grade son in middle school? Well, first of all, this technology gives your child a head start on the 21st century, when it is predicted that a quarter of the population will hold technologically oriented jobs. Technology will make your child's education more interesting and more relevant. For example, fourth grade American History will come alive when your daughter travels via the Internet to West Virginia on a virtual field trip and sees an actual battlefield of the Revolutionary War. Your eighth grader will be able to use his computer to conduct research via the Internet, visit a site via video conferencing, organize his findings on a database, and write his research paper without even leaving his desk. The sky's the limit!

### About the Internet User Agreement

The Internet User Agreement in this brochure needs to be signed by you and your child and returned to her/his school as soon as possible. There are two options available to you:

One option is to *allow* your child to have individual access to the Internet, supervised E-mail, and other forms of Internet communication. his individual access will occur only with your permission and only after your child has completed an "acceptable use" orientation session in school.

Your other option is to refuse to give permission for your child to individually access the Internet, supervised E-mail, or any other form of Internet communication. Under this choice, your child will have access to the software on the network but not be allowed individual use of the Internet. S/he will occasionally use the Internet but only in a classroom setting under direct teacher supervision.

We suggest that you and your child spend time together reading and discussing this brochure before you sign the agreement.

### Resources for families

The District's Office of Instructional and Administrative Technology and the Parent Information Center will be providing suggestions of resources to help you and your child with the technology. We will be sharing Internet safety tips and the addresses of interesting learning sites, and we'll provide information on technology via the District's web pages.

## My Rules for Online Safety

- ❑ I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parent/guardian work address or telephone number. I will not give out address, telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parent's/guardian's permission.
- ❑ I will tell my parent/guardian right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
- ❑ I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents/guardians. If my parents/guardians agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and will bring my parent/guardian along.
- ❑ I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
- ❑ I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do, I will tell my parents/guardians or staff member right away so that they can contact the online service.
- ❑ I will talk with my parent/guardian so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.

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## District Limitation of Liability

The District makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by, or through, the District system will be error-free or without defect.

- ❑ The District will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to loss of data or interruption of service.
- ❑ The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system.
- ❑ The District will not be responsible for the content of any advice or information received by a student from a source outside the District or any cost incurred as a result of seeing or accepting such advice.
- ❑ The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.
- ❑ The District is not responsible for the communication of individuals utilizing the network.

### QUESTIONS?

For more information, call or write to:

White Plains Public Schools  
Office of Instructional Technology  
500 North Street  
White Plains, New York 10605  
(914) 422-2338



# White Plains Public Schools

# Gateway to the Future

## Network Computer Guide & Internet User Agreement

## About the Internet

The Internet is a collection of worldwide information networks that provides users with immediate access to information such as pictures, movie clips, articles and documents on almost any topic, anywhere in the world. These resources can be used for class projects and research and, as the technology develops, even more applications will be possible.

This brochure contains many references to the advantages of the Internet, E-mail, and other forms of Internet communication. While our intent is to make Internet access available to achieve educational goals and objectives, students unfortunately may find their way to other materials that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive. To help address this problem, our teachers will guide students to evaluate what they access, and to use the Internet appropriately.

When the telephone and television were invented dozens of years ago, they were viewed with the same fear and concern as the Internet is today. We believe, however, that the Internet's extraordinary benefits to students, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, far exceed the potential disadvantages.

### Electronic Mail and other Forms of Internet Communication

Electronic mail (E-mail) and other forms of communication accessed through the Internet will provide students with an opportunity to communicate with other White Plains students and with people from universities, organizations and other schools. Students will not automatically be given access to E-mail; teachers will determine when access to E-mail is necessary for the completion of a specific project.

### Selection of Materials

It is very important to us that students have a stimulating learning environment. At the same time, we want to protect them from information that is not appropriate for their use. In fact, the District uses a blocking service that limits our students access to sites when they are online on the Internet. But that's not all we do.

During school, teachers of our younger students will guide them toward appropriate material. Our teachers will play a significant role in ensuring that online materials are consistent with the goals and objectives of the District by:

- Selecting materials that are age appropriate and support curriculum objectives.
- Previewing and determining the appropriateness of the materials and sites they require or recommend for student access.
- Providing guidelines and lists of resources to assist students in channeling their research activities
- Assisting students in developing the skills to assess the truthfulness and value of information.

Of course, if students inadvertently access inappropriate information we hope they will immediately let a staff member know.

Outside of school, we believe families bear the same responsibility for guiding their children in the area of technology as they do with other information sources such as television, telephone, movies, radio and books.

### Who's Who on the Internet?

When individuals use the Internet they can't see the person with whom they are communicating, how old or what sex the person is, or if the person is lying or telling the truth. It is for that reason that our faculty will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use and evaluation of the Internet.

## The ABC's of Network Behavior Access

### Access

We believe that access to, or use of, the District's network is a privilege that can open new and exciting worlds to our students. Access can be revoked, however, if a student breaks any of the rules governing the use of the network.

### Behavior

Students are responsible for good behavior on our schools computer network, just as in a classroom or hallway, or on a field trip. Students who have parental permission to use Internet services can use it for educational purposes only, and are not allowed to post chain letters or send annoying or unnecessary messages online. Since communications on the network are public in nature, general school rules for behavior and communications apply.

### Copyright Rules & Plagiarism

Our teachers will instruct their students in appropriate research practices for writing a paper using information they find on the network. Students will not be allowed to plagiarize or to "steal" ideas or writings they find online and pass them off as their own. They also will be expected to follow copyrighted laws if they download copyrighted material.

### Due Process

If a student breaks the rules governing the use of the network, the District reserves the right to suspend or terminate the student's access to and use of the network after providing the student with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the District's Discipline Policy.

### Personal Safety

Computer information networks are public places where students will share cyberspace with millions of other users. For their own safety and the safety of others, students are strongly advised not to share personal information about themselves (or others), and not to meet anyone with whom they have communicated online. If students receive messages that are inappropriate or which make them feel uncomfortable, they should promptly inform a staff member.

### Privacy

Files stored on the District's network and e-mail will not be private. In fact, network administrators will review them from time to time to maintain the system and ensure that it is being used responsibly. This routine maintenance and monitoring may lead to the discovery that a user has violated, or is violating, the agreement that he/she signed, the District's Discipline Policy, or for that matter, the law.

### Resource Limits

Since information networks have limited space capacities and we have thousands of network users, students should use the system only for educational and career development activities. In fact, at some point the District may have to set a quota for disk usage on the system.

### Respect for Property

Students are expected to respect the school District's network in much the same way as they are expected to take care of school property. Vandalism of the network will result in the cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm, disrupt or destroy hardware, software or data of another user, the District network, or other systems connected to the District network.

### Security

In any kind of computer system security is, of course, a big concern. Students should not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the District's network or to any other computer system through the District's network. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or accessing another person's files. Students should immediately notify a staff person if they have identified a possible security problem.

### Software

A wide range of software (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, HyperStudio and Inspiration) is available on the network system, and will be updated and added to periodically. Students may use only this software, and may not load other software onto the network or local workstations.

### Speech

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. When using the network to communicate with other members of the school community or with outsiders, students are expected to use language that is appropriate in a school setting, and not to engage in personal attacks or harassment, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

**Summary of  
Activities Not Permitted**

**As outlined in the Board of Education's policy and regulation,  
the following are not permitted:**

- Violating copyright laws.
- Plagiarizing another's work.
- Posting of personal information.
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks.
- Using another's password.
- Trespassing in another's folders, work or files.
- Using obscene or offensive language.
- Accessing, sending or displaying offensive material.
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources.
- Using the network for illegal purposes.
- Employing the network for commercial or political purposes.

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- If a parent/guardian does not complete and return this form, we will consider this a negative response, and will not give the student individual access to the Internet, E-mail, or any other form of Internet communication.

### Option 1

As the parent/guardian of the minor student signing below, I have discussed the contents of this brochure with my child. I *grant permission* for my child to have individual access to the Internet, E-mail, and other forms of Internet communication. I understand that students and families may be held liable for violations of the Internet User Agreement. I also understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable, but I accept responsibility for guidance of Internet use -setting and conveying standards for my child to follow when selecting, sharing or exploring information.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

x \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

As a user of the White Plains City School District's computer network, I have read the brochure and the Summary of Activities not permitted, and I will not take part in any of them. I hereby agree to comply with the stated rules while honoring all relevant laws and restrictions. I understand that violations of the Board of Education's policy may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_