

## **Instruction**

### **Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety**

Telecommunications is radically changing the way the world accesses information. A computer network, linked to the Internet, an international computer network made up of many contributing networks, represents a powerful educational resource unlike anything that precedes it. The primary purpose of use of the Internet and Hamden Public Schools Network shall be to increase student learning through education and research.

Using Internet resources both locally and worldwide, users can:

- Access search materials to meet their educational and research information needs.
- Consult with experts in various content area and unified arts fields.
- Connect with collegiate and public libraries.
- Communicate directly with others locally or world-wide.
- Engage in electronic “field trips.”

Hamden Public Schools believes in the educational value of such electronic services and recognizes their potential to support our curriculum by expanding resources available for staff and student use. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The skills required for using a computer network and the Internet are vital to the long term success of users when they enter higher education and/or the work force. The Hamden Public Schools offers its students access to its computer network (The Hamden Public Schools Network) and the Internet to enhance and support student learning.

Furthermore, these technologies are expensive to purchase, install and maintain. As the property of the Hamden Public Schools they must be carefully handled and their integrity preserved for the benefit of all. Therefore, Hamden Public Schools will be treating access to the Internet and the network as a privilege, and not a right. It is expected that users will comply with district standards and will act in a responsible and legal manner in accordance with district standards and state and federal laws.

Hamden Public Schools is aware that the Internet is an unregulated communication environment in which information changes constantly, and that some of this information is inappropriate for users, based on age and/or development levels. Hamden Public Schools’ educators will take an active role in ensuring that students and their parents are aware of the individual user’s responsibility in using the Internet resources in an ethical and educational manner. Our goal is to provide individual users with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet in ways appropriate to their individual educational needs.

Hamden Public Schools has developed regulations regarding the acceptable use of its network and the Internet to establish each user’s rights and responsibilities as well as to delineate certain prohibited activities. This policy applies to all users of the system, which include students, staff and community members (The Hamden Public Schools Network Community.)

**Instruction**

**Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety**  
(continued)

Failure to abide by the provisions of this policy or regulations may result in the loss of privileges to use the Network. Violations of this policy by students may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. In the case of employees, violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Illegal use of the Network, including intentional deletion or damage to files or data belonging to others, copyright violations, or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

A Hamden Public Schools Network user shall be held responsible for damages to equipment, a systems, or software resulting from intentional or willful acts.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee is authorized to establish guidelines for filtering, and blocking of, access to Internet sites in a manner that will not unreasonably interfere with student and staff acquisition of information appropriate to attaining the educational goals and objectives of the Hamden Public Schools.

Hamden Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing. Hamden Public Schools will not be responsible for any problems which occur while the user is on the Network. These problems include but are not limited to loss of data as a result of delays or otherwise, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by the Internet or the Network which include errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained through the Internet is at the user's own risk.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-19(b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records.

10-15b Access of parent or guardians to student's records.

10-209 Records not to be public.

11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents

11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations.

46b-56 (e) Access to Records of Minors.

## **Instruction**

### **Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety** (continued)

Legal Reference: (continued)

Connecticut Public Records Administration Schedule V - Disposition of Education Records (Revised 1983).

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of PL 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.).

Dept. of Education. 34 CFR. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)-parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.

Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (HR 4577, P.L.106-554)  
Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254[h],[I])  
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq., Part F)

Public Law 94-553, The Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. seq.

*Reno v. ACLU*, 521 U.S. 844 (1997)

*Ginsberg v. New York*, 390 U.S. 629, at 642, n.10 (1968)

*Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 868 (1988)

*Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 620, 267 (1988)

Policy adopted: June 8, 2004

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Hamden, Connecticut

## **Instruction**

### **Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety**

## **Regulations**

### **Responsibilities and Prohibitions**

With the rights of membership in the Hamden Public Schools Network community come certain responsibilities and prohibitions. Adherence to the following is required:

1. Never share passwords or accounts. Users have full responsibility for the use of their account. All violations of this policy that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of the account.
2. Never use the Network for any activities that are considered illegal pursuant to state or federal law. Illegal activities may include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
  - a. Tampering with computer hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, or vandalism or destruction of computer files.
  - b. Fraudulent copying, communications or modification of original, authored materials.
  - c. Using the network to harass or disparage others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religious or political beliefs.
  - d. Violations of copyright rules regarding software, information, and attributions of authorship. For this reason, commercial software may not be installed on the system without express permission of the system administrator.
  - e. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance of the Network or any other computer system or network on the Internet. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, the development of programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer system, and use of the network to intentionally obtain or modify files, passwords or data belonging to other users.
  - f. Hate mail, threats, harassment, and other similar communication via the Network.
3. The Network will not be used to transmit or obtain obscene or pornographic material. There is to be no display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, or cartoons, or any transmission or use of E-mail communications that contain ethnic slurs or racial epithets.

## **Instruction**

### **Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety** (continued)

#### **Responsibilities and Prohibitions** (continued)

4. Loading or use of unauthorized games and programs is prohibited.
5. Do not post communications to a public forum without the prior consent of the author of the communication. However, messages posted in a public forum such as newsgroups may be copied in subsequent communications, so long as proper attribution is given.
6. Use appropriate language. Profanity or obscenity will not be tolerated on the network. All network users should use language appropriate to school situations as indicated by district and school codes of conduct.
7. Avoid offensive or inflammatory speech. Network users must respect the rights of others both in the local community and in the Internet at large. Personal attacks are an unacceptable use of the Network.
8. Do not assume a false name or communicate on the Network using another person's name or password.
9. Behave in an exemplary manner on "virtual" field trips. When "visiting" locations on the Internet, or using video conferencing or screen sharing communications tools, network users must conduct themselves as representatives of both their school and the community.
10. Use of the Network for non-school purposes is prohibited.
11. Do not reveal personal information about yourself or others, including home address, telephone numbers, social security number or credit card number.

#### **Guidelines for Student Use**

Students who wish to use electronic services and networks that are available to them may do so provided that they:

1. Read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy.
2. Sign the Internet Use Agreement contract.
3. Students 18 and over may sign their own forms. Have parent/guardian sign the contract (if under 18).
4. Submit the completed contract to the administrator.

## **Instruction**

### **Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet, Other Computer Networks and Internet Safety** (continued)

#### **Security**

Security on any computer system is a high priority because there are so many users. If any Hamden Public Schools Network user identifies a security problem, he/she must notify an administrator or teacher at once. The user must not use another individual's Hamden Public Schools Network account. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access to the Hamden Public Schools Network.

#### **Consequences**

Failure to abide by the provisions of this policy may result in the loss of privileges to use the Network. Violations of this policy by students may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. In the case of employees, violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

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**HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Hamden, Connecticut**

**INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in the Hamden Public School System. The Board of Education is pleased to bring this access to Hamden Public Schools and believes the Internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

**Student**

I understand and will abide by the above Internet Use Agreement. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

Student Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian**

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Internet Use Agreement. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for Hamden Public Schools to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school system responsible for materials students may acquire on the network. I hereby give permission for my child to access the Internet to issue an account if necessary and to certify that the information on this form is correct.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_