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| Descriptor Term: INTERNET USE POLICY Rules and Regulations | Descriptor Code: GAHC-R | Board Approved: 3/10/2025 |
| | Rescinds: GAHC / IFBGA | Previously Approved: 3/5/2012 |

INTRODUCTION

The Gulfport School District is pleased to offer students, faculty, and staff access to the Internet and the District's Wide Area Network in accordance with this policy. The goal of providing these services is to promote educational excellence through access to resources, information, and the global community. Network resources are intended for educational and professional purposes. The reliable operation of the Network depends on the responsible conduct of its users.

Purpose

This policy outlines the acceptable use of network resources. These rules protect users and the District by mitigating risks such as cyber threats, data breaches, and network misuse.

Scope

This policy applies to all users, including employees, contractors, consultants, temporary workers, and students, as well as any device connected to the District's network, whether owned by the District or personally owned.

REGULATIONS

Monitoring & Privacy

- The District reserves the right to review, monitor, and restrict any activity conducted on District-owned or District-connected devices, networks, cloud services, and applications.
- The District does not guarantee uninterrupted network access and is not responsible for data loss, service disruptions, or unauthorized third-party access.
- Users should have no expectation of privacy when using District resources.

Security & Safety

1. Users are responsible for keeping their passwords secure and should never share login credentials.
2. Computers should be locked or logged off when left unattended.
3. Personal devices may only connect to the District network with written approval from the Technology Department.
4. All devices must run up-to-date antivirus software when connected to the District's network.
5. Suspicious emails, attachments, or online activity should be reported to the Technology Department immediately.
6. Users must not bypass security controls (e.g., filters, firewalls, user authentication).
7. Unauthorized access, sharing, or distribution of sensitive information about the District's network is strictly prohibited.

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) Compliance

- The District monitors online activities of minors and blocks access to content deemed obscene, harmful, or otherwise inappropriate.

- The District educates minors about cybersecurity, online safety, social media risks, and cyberbullying through classroom instruction and staff training.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Compliance

- The District complies with FERPA regulations to protect student data and only shares information when permitted by law.
- Parental permission is required before publishing student directory information.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) Compliance

- The District complies with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), which requires parental consent for students under the age of 13 to use certain online services.
- Parents/guardians acknowledge that their child may be required to use District-approved educational technology platforms.

PARENTAL CONSENT REQUIREMENTS

Parental Consent for Online Educational Tools & Applications

To comply with Google Workspace for Education and other online educational service provider policies, the District requires parental consent for all current and future District-approved educational applications, websites, and software platforms.

- Parents/guardians acknowledge and agree that their child may use digital tools approved by the District, including but not limited to Google services, online learning platforms, and third-party educational resources.
- If a parent/guardian does not wish for their child to use specific tools, they must submit a written request to the school principal.

USE OF WIRELESS & MOBILE DEVICES

Personal devices (e.g., smartphones, tablets, laptops) must comply with District policies and use the District's filtered wireless network for educational purposes. Students may not connect to external networks (e.g., personal hotspots, cellular data) to bypass District filtering.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

Users may not engage in any activity that violates local, state, federal, or international laws while using District resources. Examples of prohibited actions include but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized mass emails or spam
- Forging email headers to disguise the sender
- Accessing, downloading, or sharing illegal or inappropriate content
- Bypassing security measures (e.g., using VPNs to evade filtering)
- Hacking, modifying, or damaging District hardware, software, or data
- Disrupting network operations or overloading system resources
- Engaging in harassment, threats, or cyberbullying
- Sharing copyrighted material without permission
- Users must not submit personal, confidential, or sensitive information into any system, program, application, or online service.

PROCESS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS TO RESTRICT INTERNET ACCESS

If a parent/guardian does not wish for their student to have access to the Internet or specific digital tools, they must:

1. Submit a written request to the school principal.

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2. The request will be placed in the student's permanent record and settings will be adjusted accordingly.

SANCTIONS FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary actions, as outlined below, to ensure the security, integrity, and responsible use of District technology resources.

1. Violations of this policy may result in loss of network access, disciplinary action, and/or legal consequences.
2. Intentional security breaches, unauthorized access, hacking, or attempts to bypass District security controls may result in immediate revocation of technology privileges, suspension, expulsion, or legal action.
3. The District will fully cooperate with local, state, and federal authorities in cases of illegal activities conducted through the network.

**INTERNET USE POLICY #GAHC-R / JCBA-R - RULES AND REGULATIONS
ADULT USER CONTRACT**

I certify that I have read Policy GAHC-R / JCBA-R. I understand and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the policy. I understand that any violation of this policy may result in temporary or permanent loss of Network and/or Internet access and/or my user account; may result in disciplinary action; and may constitute a criminal offense. I, the undersigned, understand and agree that the District is not liable for any loss, damage, or claims arising from my use of the system. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the District from any claims, damages, or liabilities resulting from my actions or failure to act while using the system. As a user, I hereby certify that I am 18 years or older and agree to comply with the foregoing terms and conditions.

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| Name | Signature | Date |
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**INTERNET USE POLICY #GAHC-R / JCBA-R - RULES AND REGULATIONS
STUDENT USER CONTRACT**

I certify that I have read Policy GAHC-R / JCBA-R. I understand and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the policy. I acknowledge that violating this policy may result in temporary or permanent loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action as outlined in District policies, and, where applicable, legal consequences. I, the undersigned, agree not to hold the District responsible for and waive any claim for any loss or damage arising as a result of his/her use of the system and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the District from any loss or claim which may arise as a result of my, the undersigned, actions or failure to act in connection with any use of the system.

As a user, I hereby agree to comply with the foregoing terms and conditions.

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|------|-----------|------|
| Name | Signature | Date |
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If the user is under 18 years of age, a parent/legal guardian must sign below, acknowledging that they have read and reviewed this policy with their child, understand its terms, and consent to their child's use of District-approved digital tools and technology resources.

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| Name | Signature | Date |
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