

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. The Topeka Public Schools supports the use of advanced technology including computers, computer networks, the Internet, electronic mail, online services, and other applications, including social media networks and tools, that facilitate access to information, resource sharing, research, collaborative learning, communications and integrated technology instruction. These provided technologies shall be used in support of education and other endeavors consistent with the district's goals and objectives. Limited, appropriate personal use of computer technology resources is permitted if it does not interfere with professional responsibilities, student responsibilities or the educational process.**
- B. Employees and students are responsible for displaying appropriate behavior and communication while using district technologies, just as they are in a classroom or other school property. For employees, general rules of professional conduct apply. Teaching staff shall maintain a productive learning environment while using these technologies. For students, general school rules for behavior and communication apply. Use of district computer technologies must comply with the district and school rules for appropriate use (as outlined in district policy, regulations and school handbooks), the rules established by other network or computing resources used and local, state and federal law. Use for commercial activities is governed by Administrative Regulation No. 2475-1, Advertising, Commercialism, Fund Raising, or Selling in the Schools, and is generally not acceptable. Use for commercial product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.**
- C. Teachers, administrators, and others who make decisions regarding student access and use of the Internet shall, in making such decisions, at all times consider the district's stated educational mission and the student acceptable use policy. To the extent possible and appropriate, students' use of the Internet shall be structured in ways that encourage access to those resources that have been evaluated prior to use. District staff shall supervise students utilizing district-provided Internet access. The wishes of any parent or guardian wanting to prohibit usage of the Internet by his/her child shall be supported and respected.**
- D. Employees shall communicate with telecommunication tools in a professional manner consistent with district policies and local, state and federal law. Electronic mail, telecommunications and other applications shall not be improperly used to disclose confidential information about district employees or to disclose information from student education records in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, as amended, and its interpretive regulations, 34 C.F.R. § 99.1, et seq. This restriction shall not apply to the district's student information system or other district administrative software that is used by authorized staff members in a manner that complies with FERPA and its interpretive regulations.**
- E. Users are governed by the security and safety regulations established by the district and its Internet access provider. Users are responsible for the use of their system accounts and for protecting their passwords. No user will reveal personal information online about themselves or any other district staff or students. No employee will use another individual's account without written permission. Employees may not share account information or passwords with any student. No student will use another individual's account under any circumstances.**

- F. Activities and communication on the district network are not private. Network administrators, teachers, and other appropriate district staff may review staff directories, files and communications from time to time to prevent misuse and to perform system maintenance. District administrators or their designees may delete files that are not kept to a manageable storage level or are deemed inappropriate. Student files and student communications may be reviewed and/or deleted to prevent misuse and to ensure students are using the system responsibly and in compliance with laws and district policies. District administrators or their designees may review all content in any Internet or online accounts paid for, in whole or in part, by the district or any school, without notice of any kind.**
- G. Content found on Internet resources may contain defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material. The Topeka Public Schools does not condone the use of such information and will not knowingly permit usage in the school environment. The district reserves the right to restrict access to resources that do not meet district informational, instructional, and educational outcomes. Internet sites that are considered obscene, as defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code, child pornography, as defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code, or harmful to minors as defined in Kansas law (K.S.A. 21-4301) are inappropriate under any circumstances and access to those sites is restricted. Such restriction will be partially accomplished using a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access.**
- H. The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the access it is providing to district technologies. The district will not be responsible for any damages suffered therefrom. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, system maintenance, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The district denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information, or for any commercial transactions conducted through its system.**
- I. Any statement of personal belief found on district computer technology resources is implicitly understood to be representative of the author's individual point of view, and not that of the Topeka Public Schools, its employees, or the participating school. No representations to the contrary shall be published without written approval from the superintendent or his designee. Principals or district administrators may review and/or delete content in any district Internet or any online commercial account paid for, in whole or in part, by the district or any school, without notice of any kind.**
- J. Prior to use of school computers, computer networks, the Internet, online services and other applications accessed through district resources, each employee desiring to use such accounts(s) shall sign an Employee Access Contract as defined in the Administrative Regulations, specifying awareness and acceptance of the restrictions of the district's employee acceptable use policy.**
- K. Procedures for classroom and library media center use will be established at each building and an acceptable-use policy, specific to those procedures and inclusive of district policy will be published in each school's staff and student handbooks. Teachers and other supervisory staff will be responsible for appropriate classroom usage and direct instruction about acceptable use. Such instruction shall include information about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in**

chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. District procedures for parent or guardian requests to prohibit his/her child's access to the Internet will be established and detailed in Administrative Regulation.

- L. Only Information Technology department staff are allowed to install, run or manage networking devices on the district network. Any other attempt to install a router, wireless access point, switch or any other device performing networking functions on the district network is prohibited.

II. USE OF APPLICATIONS

A. Definitions.

1. "Personal software" is any kind of software or application that has not been provided by the district or specifically approved by the District Application Review Committee for download and/or installation.
2. A "user" is any person using a district computer, device or district provided or approved software.
3. "Illegal use" means use of software or application that fails to comply with local, state or federal law, or with licensing requirements of the software or application in question.

B. The use of personal software on district computers and devices is prohibited.

C. Illegal use or distribution of district provided or approved software or applications is prohibited.

D. Assumption of Liability.

1. Users who violate these prohibitions assume any and all legal responsibility for any violation of licensing or other legal requirement that may be associated with the use of personal software, including tortious acts, criminal conduct or any other action not in compliance with such requirements.
2. Users who violate these prohibitions assume any and all liability for damages caused by their use of personal software on district computers, devices or networks.

E. Discipline.

1. Anyone who violates the prohibitions described above is subject to discipline as determined by appropriate district administration.
2. Discipline may include loss of privileges to use district networks, loss of privileges to use district computers or devices, or any other sanction determined appropriate by district administration, including termination (for staff) and expulsion (for students).

F. Reporting

1. Anyone believed to have acted criminally while violating one of the aforementioned prohibitions shall be reported by district administration to the proper authorities.

2. Anyone found to have acted in contravention to software licensing while violating one of the aforementioned prohibitions shall, where appropriate, be reported to the licensor.

III. USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

A. Definitions

1. “Public social media networks” are defined to include: Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media generally available to the public or consumers and which do not fall within the District’s electronic technologies network (e.g. MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, blog sites, etc.).
2. “District approved password-protected social media tools” are those that fall within the District’s electronic technologies network or the learning management system which the District has approved for educational use. The District has greater authority and responsibility to protect minors from inappropriate content and can limit public access within this limited public forum.

- B. The District recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and learning tool. Toward that end, the District provides password-protected social media tools and District-approved technologies for e-learning and encourages use of District tools for collaboration by employees. However, public social media networks, outside of those sponsored by the District, may not be used for classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities without the prior authorization of the building principal.

The District and its individual schools may use public social media networks and other communication technologies in fulfilling their responsibility for effectively communicating with the general public.

Topeka Public Schools takes no position on employees’ decisions to participate in the use of social media networks. However, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws or District policies. Additionally they maintain responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks, including requirements for mandated reporting of abuse. Use of social media networks shall comply with regulation 2935-3.

IV. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION

The use of the district’s computer technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use, in violation of any of the provisions of this policy, may result in cancellation of those privileges. The Topeka Public Schools reserves the right to deny, revoke, suspend, or close any user account at any time, based upon its determination of inappropriate use by the account holder or user. Inappropriate use may also result in disciplinary or legal action including suspension or termination of employees, suspension or expulsion of students from school, assessment of the cost of damages to hardware/software and criminal prosecution under appropriate local, state, and federal laws. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of inappropriate use with other computer systems may be denied access.