

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

This document sets forth the rights and responsibilities for all students and staff and District employees under the District's Internet Safe and Responsible Use Policy and Regulations. The intent of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to provide a computing environment in the Beverly Public Schools (BPS) that will enhance teaching and learning, be safe and secure and financially sustainable by the school district. Most standards and policies outlined in this AUP apply to all students and BPS Staff who use computers and access the internet in our schools, i.e. "BPS Computer Users" = users. **Standards and policies in this document that apply only to BPS students and/or parents will specifically reference these users in the text.**

### Beverly Public Schools Computer Users Rights and Expectations

#### A. Educational Purpose

1. The district Internet system has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, continuing education, professional or career development, and educationally enriching research.
2. The district internet system has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The district has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you access or post through the system. The user is expected to follow the rules set forth in this policy and the law in his/her use of the district internet system. BPS students are also expected to follow the student disciplinary code outlined in the BPS Student Handbooks in his/her use of the district internet system.
3. Users may not use the district internet system for commercial purposes. This means users may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the district Internet system.
4. Users are expected to act in a manner consistent with all other district policies and protocols.

#### B. Limitation of Liability

The district will not guarantee that the functions or services provided through the district internet service will be without error. The district will not be responsible for any damage the users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data, interruptions of service, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the system. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. Users can be held financially responsible for any harm that may result from intentional misuse of the system. The student may only use the system if his/her parents have signed a disclaimer of claims for damages against the district.

#### C. Email

1. School sponsored email should be used for educational or administrative purposes only.
2. Email transmission, stored data, or any other use of online services by students, shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use.
3. All BPS Staff email and all contents are property of Beverly Public Schools.
4. Email that is created or received by a public school employee is a matter of public record and may be subject to public production in accordance with MA public records law.

## **D. Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is prohibited and is defined as repeated use by one or more students of an electronic expression (including the transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, photo optical system, including but not limited to the electronic mail, the internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication, creation of web pages or blogs in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, the knowing impersonation of another person, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages or the distribution of communications to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons), alone or in combination with any written or verbal expression or physical acts or gestures, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially or substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of school. See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 370.

## **E. Access to Materials**

For students to be permitted to gain independent access to the web or individual email accounts, they must agree to and abide by the standards set out below. For students under 18, parents must provide signed permission forms before students will be permitted to gain independent access to the web or individual email accounts. If the Beverly Public Schools does not receive a signed user agreement and if applicable a signed parental permission form, students will not gain independent access to the web or individual email accounts, but they still may have exposure to the Internet during classroom instruction or library research exercises.

1. Users will not use the district internet system to access material in violation of the following standards:

- a. Prohibited Material. Prohibited material may not be accessed at any time, for any purpose. The district designated the following types of materials as prohibited: obscene materials, pornography, material that appeals to a prurient or unhealthy interest in, or depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, violence, nudity, sex, death, or bodily functions, material that has been designated as for "adults" only and material that promotes or advocates illegal activities.
- b. Restricted Material/Sites. Occasionally materials that may have been considered prohibited may have educational value when used in a class context. This included materials such as literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. In addition, restricted material includes materials that promote or advocate the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco; harassment or bullying; hate and discrimination, satanic and cult group membership, school cheating, and weapons. Social networking and personal advertisements sites are also considered to be restricted materials.
- c. Limited Access Material. Limited access material is material that is generally considered to be non-educational or entertainment. Limited access material may be accessed in the context of specific learning activities that are directed by a teacher. Limited access material includes such material as electronic commerce, games, jokes, recreation, entertainment, sports, and investments.

2. If a student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should immediately disclose this access to his/her teacher. This will protect a student against a claim that he/she has intentionally violated this policy.

## **F. Privacy and Communication Safety Requirements**

Personal contact information includes student name together with other information that would allow an individual to locate the student, including, but not limited to, parent's name, home address or location, work address or location, or phone number.

1. Users will not disclose personal contact information, except to education institutions for educational purposes, companies or other entities for career development purposes, or with specific staff approval.
2. Users will keep their log-in and password private. Use by anyone other than yourself creates a security risk for both your own files and the network. Seek help from an administrator if you forget your password or cannot get into your account.
3. User shall not allow others persons to use their name, login, password, or files for any reason unless specifically directed by a faculty or staff member.
4. Using the school's internet system, students will not disclose names, personal contact information, or any other private or personal information about other students under any circumstances.

#### **G. Illegal, Unauthorized, and Inappropriate Uses and Activities**

1. Users will not use computers to make sound recordings or digital images of others without the consent of those being recorded.
2. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the district internet system or to any other computer system through the district internet system or go beyond his/her authorized access. This includes but is not limited to, attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files.
3. Users will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the district internet system or any other computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses, by any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data or hardware.
4. Users will not use the district internet system to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, gambling, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of a person, harassment, discrimination, bullying, or cyberbullying of other students, etc.
5. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to all speech communicated through the district internet system, including but not limited to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages.
6. BPS students will not agree to meet with someone they met online without the approval of their parents. Students must report any contact of this nature, or any messages that feel inappropriate, to school officials immediately.
7. BPS students will not respond to any unsolicited online contacts
8. Users will act in accordance with the district harassment and discrimination and bullying policies. (e.g. cyberbullying)
9. Users will not repost messages sent to him/her without the permission of the person who sent the message.
10. Users will not access, send, or forward materials or communications that are obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language, images or materials.
11. Users will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information, images or materials about a person or organization.

12. Users will not post information or images that could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
13. Users will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
14. Users will not discuss highly sensitive or confidential school department information on email communications.
15. BPS Internet and email systems may not be used for political or social advocacy or solicitation. This prohibition includes fundraising or advocacy for any non- school organizations

## **H. Privacy**

1. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the district internet system.
2. In the event there is a claim that the student user has violated this policy, any other district policy, or student disciplinary code in his/her use of the district internet system, an investigation will be conducted. The student will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in district policy and the student disciplinary code as outlined in the BPS Student Handbooks.
3. If the violation also involves a violation of district policies or other provisions of the student disciplinary code, it will be handled in a manner described in the policies or code. Additional restrictions may be placed on the student's use of the internet.
4. The district will not turn over student's information for any financial gain.

## **I. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

1. Users will not plagiarize works that are found on the Internet or the school's network. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.
2. Users will respect the rights of copyright owners in his/her use of materials found on, disseminated through, or posted to the internet. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright. Copyright law can be very confusing. If a student has questions, he/she should ask the librarian.
3. Users may not download copyrighted materials to any school computer without express permission of the copyright holder, unless it is used in an educational context following fair use guidelines.
4. Users must comply with trademark, copyright laws and all license agreements.

## **J. System Security and Resource Limits**

### **1. System Security**

- a. Users are responsible for his/her individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use his/her account. Under no conditions should a Users provide his/her password to another person, unless directed by faculty or staff member.
- b. Users will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if he/she has identified a possible security problem. The student should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- c. Users will not damage the computers, computer systems, or computer networks. Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the district virus protection procedures.

## **2. Resource Limits.**

- a. The student will use the system only for educational and career development activities and limited, personal research.
- b. Users will not download large files, or use excessive amounts of bandwidth unless absolutely necessary for academic use.
- c. Users will not misuse district, school, or personal distribution lists or discussion groups for sending irrelevant messages.

## **K. Consequences**

1. Violations of any aspect of the Beverly Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy will result in enforcement of the school's disciplinary code. Students committing these infractions will be subject to sanctions such as, but not limited to, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, legal consequences and fines.
2. Illegal, unauthorized, and/or inappropriate uses and activities will be investigated and remediated as outlined in the Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying Policies. Student bystanders who witness discrimination, harassment, bullying, cyberbullying and/or retaliation are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the principal, building equity coordinator, Title(s) VI & IX Coordinator, or any other school staff member.

Approved: February 9, 2011

## **Beverly Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy Agreement**

I have read the Beverly Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to comply with the policy. I understand disciplinary action may be taken as a result of violating these standards.

Users please print your name here: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature; \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Beverly Public Schools**  
**Acceptable Use Policy Agreement for Students under Age 18**  
**Parent/Guardian Permission for Users under 18 Years of Age**

1. I have read the Acceptable Use policy for the Beverly Public Schools
2. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes.
3. I recognize that some controversial materials exist on the Internet.
4. I understand that the level of my child's independent access to the Internet depends on my child's grade level, as explained in the Acceptable Use Policy.
5. I give permission for my son/daughter to have the access to the Internet that corresponds with his/her grade level.
6. I have discussed with my son/daughter his/her responsibilities regarding the use of the Beverly Public Schools Network and internet access.
7. My son/daughter understands and agrees to follow the Acceptable Use Policy of the Beverly Public Schools.
8. I understand that any violation by my son/daughter of the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or revocation of his/her email account or independent access to the World Wide Web, school disciplinary action and, if warranted, referral to law enforcement authorities.
9. I will not hold the Beverly Public Schools liable or responsible for any materials my son/daughter accesses, acquires, or transmits via the Beverly Public Schools Computer network and/or Internet connection.

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Parent/ Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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