

As part of its goal to offer the best possible education for students, the Transylvania County Board of Education (the “Board”) seeks to provide a wide range of resources to help students obtain information, become thinkers and problem solvers, and develop the skills required by an evolving business and educational community. ~~This includes training in the utilization of computer hardware, software, and telecommunications resources.~~

~~Transylvania County Schools offers electronic network access for students and employees of the school system. One component of this network is the Internet.~~

~~The purpose of the electronic network is to support the instructional program, including:~~

- ~~▪ The North Carolina Standard Course of Study~~
- ~~▪ Learning opportunities, information retrieval, searching strategies, research skills, and critical thinking~~
- ~~▪ Life-long learning~~

~~Through the Internet, students and employees are able to access current information and news, as well as resources from businesses, libraries, educational institutions, government agencies, research institutions and associations, and a variety of other sources. In addition, they may communicate with individuals and groups around the world by having electronic pen pals, participating in projects with other schools, and joining educational news groups.~~

~~All users (to include employees of Transylvania County Schools, student users, and parents of student users if the user is under 18 years old) must be aware of and understand that Transylvania County Schools cannot control all contents of the information available. Some information may be controversial and/or offensive. The system does not condone the use of such materials and takes all reasonable precautions to limit access to these materials. The system employs a filtering program to limit access to inappropriate material, provides adult supervision, and trains students in the responsible use of information services. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. School employees, students, and parents must be aware that access to the Internet will be withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others, or who do not follow the Internet Rules and Regulations established by Transylvania County Schools and by their school.~~

~~Prior to the use of electronic resources, each user in Transylvania County Schools (to include both students and employees) shall complete an Internet Use Agreement that indicates user agreement and/or parent/guardian permission when required. Copies of the Rules and Regulations of the use of the Internet will be available on the district Web site and through the online School Board Policy manual, and will also be posted in all media centers and computer labs throughout the school district.~~

Technological resources, including computers, other electronic devices, programs, networks and the Internet, provide opportunities to enhance instruction, appeal to different learning styles, and

meet the educational goals of the Board. Through the school system's technological resources, users can observe events as they occur around the world, interact with others on a variety of subjects, and acquire access to current and in-depth information.

Use of technological resources should be integrated into the educational program. Technological resources should be used in teaching the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and in meeting the educational goals of the Board. School leaders should provide suggestions for using technological resources in the curriculum, and teachers are encouraged to further incorporate the use of technological resources into their lesson plans.

The Superintendent shall ensure that school system computers with Internet access comply with federal requirements regarding filtering software, Internet monitoring, and Internet safety policies. The Superintendent shall develop any regulations and submit any certifications necessary to meet such requirements.

A. REQUIREMENTS FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The use of school system technological resources, such as computers and other electronic devices, networks, and the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Before using the Internet, all students must be trained about appropriate on-line behavior. Such training must cover topics such as Internet safety, cyber-bullying, and interacting with others on social networking websites and in chat rooms. Parents who wish to restrict or disallow their child's access to school system technological resources may do so by submitting an opt-out form to their child's principal. Opt-out forms are available in electronic format on the school district's official website at <http://www.tcsnc.org> and are available in hard copy format in each school's main office and at the Morris Education Center, located at 225 Rosenwald Lane in Brevard, NC.

Anyone who uses school system computers or electronic devices or who accesses the school network or the Internet at an educational site must comply with the requirements set forth below. All students and employees must annually receive a copy of this policy or instructions for obtaining an electronic copy of this policy online. By using school system technological resources, students and employees indicate that they understand and will strictly comply with these requirements. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in disciplinary action, including revocation of user privileges. Willful misuses may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal law.

1. School system technological resources are provided for school-related purposes only. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to activities that support learning and teaching. Use of school system technological resources for other purposes, including commercial gain or profit, is prohibited.

2. Under no circumstance may software purchased by the school system be copied for personal use.
3. Students and employees must comply with all applicable Board policies, administrative regulations, and school standards and rules in using technological resources. All applicable laws, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records, apply to technological resource use. Any use that violates state or federal law is strictly prohibited.
4. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally accessing, downloading, storing, printing, or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages, or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, or considered to be harmful to minors.
5. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).
6. Use of the school district's "All Users" e-mail distribution list is limited to the Superintendent or designee. Users who wish to disseminate mass e-mail messages to employees of the school district should coordinate those arrangements with the Superintendent or designee.
7. Users must respect the privacy of others. When using e-mail, chat rooms, blogs, or other forms of electronic communication, students must not reveal personally identifiable, private, or confidential information, such as the home address or telephone number, of themselves or fellow students. In addition, school employees must not disclose on the Internet or on school system websites or web pages any personally identifiable information concerning students (including names, addresses, and telephone numbers) without the written permission of a parent or guardian or an eligible student, except as otherwise permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or policy JO, "Confidentiality and Access to Student Records." Users also may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.
8. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, or computer networks. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance. Users must scan any downloaded files for viruses.
9. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs, or

any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device, or network without the express permission of the Superintendent or designee.

10. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as “hacking” or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems, or accounts.
11. Users are prohibited from using another individual’s user account. Users may not read, alter, change, execute, or delete files belonging to another user without the owner’s express prior permission.
12. If a user identifies a security problem on a technological resource, he or she must immediately notify a system administrator. Users must not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access.
13. Teachers shall make reasonable efforts to supervise a student’s use of the Internet during instructional time.
14. Views may be expressed as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the Superintendent or designee.

B. RESTRICTED MATERIAL ON THE INTERNET

Before a student may use the Internet for any purpose, the student’s parent must be made aware of the possibility that the student could obtain access to inappropriate material. The student user is responsible for appropriate use of the Internet and consenting to monitoring by school system personnel of the student’s e-mail communication and use of the Internet.

The Board is aware that there is information on the Internet that is not related to the educational program. The Board also is aware that the Internet may provide information and opportunities to communicate on subjects that are not suitable for school-age children and that many parents would find objectionable. School system personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from having access to inappropriate materials, such as violence, nudity, obscenity, or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. The Superintendent shall ensure that the Internet service provider or the school district’s technology personnel have installed a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access to audio or visual depictions that are obscene, that are considered pornography, or that are harmful to minors. School officials may disable such filters for an adult who uses a school-owned computer for bona fide research or another lawful educational purpose. School system personnel may not restrict

Internet access to ideas, perspectives, or viewpoints if the restriction is motivated solely by disapproval of the ideas involved.

C. PRIVACY

No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources. School system administrators or individuals designated by the Superintendent may review files, monitor all communication, and intercept e-mail messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. School system personnel shall monitor on-line activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned computer.

D. PERSONAL WEBSITES

The Superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize school system or individual school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

1. Students

Though school personnel generally do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school system computers during non-school hours, when the student's on-line behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the *Code of Student Conduct* and applicable Board policies.

2. Employees

All employees must use the school system network when communicating with students about any school-related matters. Thus, employees may not use personal websites or on-line networking profiles to post information in an attempt to communicate with students about school-related matters.

Employees are to maintain an appropriate, professional relationship with students at all times. Employees are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on employee personal websites or on-line networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. If an employee creates and/or posts inappropriate content on a website or profile and it has a negative impact on the employee's ability to perform his or her job as it relates to working with students, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. This subsection applies to all employees, volunteers, and student teachers working in the school system.

E. DISCLAIMER

Neither the Board nor its agents or employees will be responsible for any damages suffered, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, service interruptions, or inaccurate information. The user accepts personal responsibility for any information obtained or sent via the school district's technological resources, including the sharing of personal information, which includes but is not limited to home address, bank account, and credit card information.

Legal References: U.S. Const. Amend. I; Children's Internet Protection Act, 47 U.S.C. 254(h)(5); Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; 17 U.S.C. 101 *et seq.*; 20 U.S.C. 6777; N. C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-325(e), -391

Cross References: *Code of Student Conduct*; Policy JO, "Confidentiality and Access to Student Records"

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