

Rockingham County Public Schools

Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

File: IIBEA

The purpose of telecommunications technology in Rockingham County Public Schools is to support research, communication, and education and to provide access to unique resources and opportunities for collaborative work. The use of RCPS computer networks, including Internet access, must be in support of education and consistent with the educational objectives of Rockingham County Public Schools and the Virginia Board of Education.

This policy applies to all users of RCPS electronic information, services, and networks. By using or accessing Division facilities or services, the user agrees to abide by this policy.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental for productive citizens and employees. Access to the Internet enables students, teachers, and administrators to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging information with people around the world. The Division expects that its teachers will blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources should be structured in ways which point students to those which have been evaluated prior to use. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed, they will be subject to supervision in an effort to provide Internet use that is particularly suited to learning objectives. Rockingham County Public Schools will use a filter which seeks to prevent access to pornography as set out in Va. Code § 18.2-374.1:1 or as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256, obscenity as defined by Va. Code § 18.2-372 or 18 U.S.C. § 1460, material which the school division deems to be harmful to juveniles as defined in Va. Code § 18.2-390, material that is harmful to minors as defined in 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(7)(G), and material that is otherwise inappropriate for minors. However, it is recognized that this filter alone is no guarantee that users will not be able to find Internet resources which are profane, offensive, obscene, or otherwise objectionable. The ultimate responsibility for appropriate use of Internet resources lies with the user. Parents and guardians may request alternative activities not requiring Internet use for their minor children.

Students utilizing RCPS-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by the Division's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior on-line just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Division. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access requires responsibility.

The following uses of school-provided computer networks including Internet access are not permitted by any users:

- a. "hack into" or otherwise access data not intended for the user including, but not limited to, other users' files and administrative data;

- b. to share passwords with others, circumvent the menu/password and/or Internet filtering software installed on Division computers;
- c. to access, upload, download, or distribute profane, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit, or illegal material;
- d. to transmit profane, obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- e. to violate any local, state, or federal law;
- f. to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another individual or organization including destroying data by creating or spreading viruses or by other means; and,
- g. to violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.

The following uses of school-provided computer networks including Internet access are not permitted by students unless authorized by the Rockingham County Public Schools Technology Department:

- a. To access the school division computer network with privately owned laptop computers
- b. To download and/or install software on the school division's computers

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers are always regarded as property of the Division. Authorized administrators and faculty may review files and logs of Internet use at any time, without reason or prior notice, to maintain system integrity and determine that users are acting responsibly or otherwise consistent with this policy.

Any violation of Division policy and rules may result in immediate termination of Division-provided access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate conduct. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

The Rockingham County School Board makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The Division will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including--but not limited to--loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service; the accuracy, nature, or quality of information stored on Division diskettes, hard drives, or servers; the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through Division-provided Internet access; personal property used to access Division computers or networks or for Division-provided Internet access; nor for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from Division-provided access to the Internet.

Adopted:

Legal Refs:

- 18 U.S.C. §§ 1460, 2256.
- 47 U.S.C. § 254.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 18.2-372, 18.2-374.1:1, 18.2-390, 22.1-70.2 and 22.1-78.

Cross Refs: EGAAA Computer Software Copyright Compliance
IIBEB Internet Privacy

JFC Student Conduct
JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct