

Hamilton County Schools

Responsible Use Policy

The Internet and email provide invaluable resources and communications to Hamilton County students and employees (hereafter referred to as “user”). Users accessing the Internet are representing the Hamilton County School System and therefore have a responsibility to use the Internet in a productive manner that meets the ethical standards of an educational institution. The District’s Internet Safety Policy and the Technology Acceptable Usage Agreement shall be reviewed, evaluated and revised, as needed, annually.

Scope of Use: To ensure that students receive a quality education in an intellectually stimulating environment, it is the goal of the Hamilton County Schools to provide all students with access to a variety of technological resources. The creation of a large and varied technological environment demands that technology usage be conducted in legally and ethically appropriate ways consistent with the policies and instructional goals of the Hamilton County Schools. Thus, it is the intention of the Hamilton County Schools that all technological resources be used in accordance with any and all school system policies and procedures as well as local, state, and federal laws and/or guidelines governing the usage of technology and its component parts. Additionally, it is understood that all users of Hamilton County Schools will use the provided technological resources so as not to waste or abuse, interfere with or cause harm to other individuals, institutions, or companies.

Rules for Usage: The primary goal of the technology environment is to support the educational and instructional endeavors of students and employees of the Hamilton County Schools. Use of any and all technological resources is a privilege and not a right. Any violation of the Acceptable Usage Agreement may result in termination of usage and/or appropriate discipline. **All Hamilton County Schools students and their parent/guardians and all Hamilton County Schools employees must sign this agreement as acknowledgment of receipt of these procedures and policies.**

I. ACCESS:

- A. Any user who accesses the district’s network or any computer system for any purpose agrees to be bound by the terms of the Agreement, even if no signed Agreement is on file.
- B. The use of all Hamilton County Schools technological resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate or suspected inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges pending investigation.
- C. The district’s network or any computer system is in effect an extension of the classroom experience. The user, student or employee, should use the same judgment as they would in a classroom.
- D. Students accessing the internet by any means other than the District’s network while in a Hamilton County School facility is prohibited unless approved by administration. The HCDE network is filtered to meet CIPA compliance. (Refer to VI. Internet Filtering.) Students are accountable for their actions when connected to an outside network. HCDE is not liable.
- E. All computers connected to the Hamilton County Schools HCDE Radius (wireless) or wired must be the property of Hamilton County Schools unless approved by a principal or supervisor. Individuals are prohibited from connecting a computer to the Hamilton County School’s network without first obtaining permission from a supervisor staff member. HCDE Guest wireless is available for personal and HCDE assigned devices. All devices connected to the HCDE network are subject to the same guidelines.

- F. Individuals may use only accounts, files, software, and technological resources that are assigned to him/her.
- G. Individuals may not log in to or attempt to log in to the network by using another person's account and/or password or allow any other person to use his/her password to access the network, e-mail, the Internet or other password protected resources
- H. Individuals must take all reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorized access to accounts and data and any other unauthorized usage within and/or outside the Hamilton County Schools.
- I. Individuals identified as a security risk may be denied access to the Districts technological resources.
- J. Individuals must not disrupt or attempt to disrupt any computer services or data by spreading viruses, spamming or by any other means. Any use of technological resources that reduces the efficiency of use for others will be considered a violation of this agreement.
- K. Individuals must not modify or attempt to modify hardware, utilities, and configurations, or change the restrictions associated with his/her accounts, or attempt to breach any security system, either with or without malicious intent.
- L. The Supervisor and/or site administrators will determine when inappropriate use has occurred and each has the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts and access. Users have the right to appeal the decision to the site administrator or Director of Schools.
- M. Accessing the HCDE network from outside the network is prohibited without prior authorization.

II. PRIVACY:

- A. To maintain network integrity and to insure the network is being used responsibly, the Supervisor reserves the right to review files and network communications.
- B. Users should have no expectation of privacy with regards to any data stored, transmitted or accessed on any device using the HCDE network.
- C. Because communications on the Internet are often public in nature, all users should be careful to maintain appropriate and responsible communications.
- D. The Hamilton County Schools cannot guarantee the privacy, security, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via the Internet.
- E. All computer data including search histories and email communications transmitted on school system computers or by means of the school system network are subject to monitoring and may be archived.
- F. Users are encouraged to avoid storing personal and/or private information on the District and/or schools' technological resources.
- G. The system-wide technology staff performs routine backups of District servers. However, all users are responsible for the backup and storage of any critical files and/or data.

III. COPYRIGHT:

- A. The illegal use of copyrighted materials is prohibited. Reproductions of documents, graphics, pictures, digital recordings, music, etc. shall be subject to fair use guidelines and applicable laws and regulations. (For Fair Use guidelines, go to this link: <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>).
- B. Illegal copies of software may not be created or used on school system equipment.
- C. Any questions about copyright provisions should be directed to the Principal or Supervisor.
- D. The legal and ethical practices of appropriate use of technological resources will be taught to all students in the system (i.e. during lab orientation, network orientation, etc).
- E. If more than one copy of a software package is needed, a site license, lab pack, or network version must be purchased. The District Technology Department and the person requesting the software will be responsible for determining how many copies should be purchased.
- F. The site administrator at each location is authorized to sign license agreements for a site within the system. Copies of any system-wide license agreements must be signed by the District Technology Department and/or Superintendent and distributed to all schools that will use the software.
- G. The District Technology staff or site technology assistant is responsible for installation of all software in use on the local area network and/or individual workstations within the Hamilton County Schools.
- H. Users should not purchase software for use on District computers or other technological resources without prior consultation with the District Technology staff.

IV. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:

- A. Communications with students/parents/guardians, even if not using school resources, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of one's position as an educator. For official HCDE business, HCDE employees are strongly encouraged to use an HCDE email account when communicating with a student via email.
- B. Electronic communication between staff and students should be written as a professional representing HCDE. This includes word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter.
- C. All data stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored. Hamilton County Schools' e-mail accounts may not be used for sending or attempting to send anonymous messages.
- D. Photos and videos of students and staff should not be shared or posted electronically without permission.
- E. Hamilton County Schools' e-mail accounts may not be used for sending district-wide emails.
- F. Electronic correspondence is a public record under the public record's law and may be subject to public inspection.

- G. The line between professional life and personal life must be clear at all times. Staff members should only use their educational email account or other approved communication method (Google, Edmodo, etc.) to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians, and should only communicate on matters directly related to education. Relationships associated with such educational social media accounts should only be with members of the educational community, such as administrators, teachers, students, and parent of such students. It is strongly recommended that staff reject requests from individuals who do not fit into these categories.
- H. All staff members will be responsible for information that they make public through the use of electronic communication. Teachers are the gatekeeper for the privacy and protection of students. When other people can see your conversations with the students (i.e.- Other “Friends” on Facebook), you may be endangering them and also violating the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- I. HCDE employees who wish to utilize an approved HCDE website for communication must notify parents and obtain signed permission from the parent(s) to electronically post/share student pictures.

V. INTERNET:

- A. The intent of the Hamilton County Schools is to provide access to resources available via the Internet with the understanding that faculty, staff, and students will access and use information that is appropriate for his/her various curricula.
- B. All school rules and guidelines for appropriate technology usage shall apply to usage of the Internet.
- C. Teachers are responsible for previewing Internet resources that will be presented in the classroom prior to their introduction.
- D. Users will gain access to the Internet by agreeing to conduct themselves in a considerate and responsible manner and by providing written permission from parents, guardians, students, employees via this signed agreement.
- E. Students who are allowed independent access to the Internet will have the capability of accessing material that has not been screened.

VI. INTERNET FILTERING:

- A. On the District’s network, internet access for all users is filtered by a filtering system provided through the school system’s ISP and by the District firewall system by URL and IP address.
- B. URLs and IP addresses may be added to or deleted from the filtered list by the District Technology staff.
- C. Employees have the ability to override filtered sites. When accessing blocked sites, it is expected to preview any resources prior to classroom presentation. Employees are also expected to refrain from any inappropriate sites.

VII. INTERNET SAFETY MEASURES:

- A. Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

1. Safety and security of students when using any form of direct electronic communications;
 2. Preventing unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities by students on-line; and
 3. Restricting students’ access to materials that may be inappropriate or harmful to them.
- B. The processes for ensuring that the system’s resources are not used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit material are:
1. Monitoring on-line activities of students;
 2. Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access (for both students and adults) to material that is obscene, pornographic or potentially harmful to students; and
 3. Maintaining a usage log.
- C. All students will participate in Internet safety training, which is integrated into the District’s instructional program in grades K-12. Schools will use existing avenues of communication to inform parents, grandparents, caregivers, community stakeholders and other interested parties about Internet safety.

VIII. LIABILITY:

- A. The Hamilton County Department of Education does not guarantee the reliability of the data connection and does not verify the accuracy of information found on the Internet.
- B. The Hamilton County Department of Education does not guarantee the confidentiality of any communications or data transmitted on its system.
- C. The Hamilton County Department of Education is not liable for any communication that has taken place on a personal device.

Hamilton County Schools Responsible Use Agreement

I have read and agree to comply with the Hamilton County Department of Education Responsible Use Policy (<http://www.hcde.org/rup>). I understand that any violations of these regulations are unethical, potentially illegal, and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action may be taken up to and including termination (employee) or suspension/expulsion (student) or possible criminal charges.

Student/Parent Section Only:

Student's Name (Please Print)

Location

Student's Signature

Date

As the parent or legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for him/her to access networked computer services such as electronic mail (e-mail) and the Internet. I further understand that deliberate misuse by the student resulting in hardware and/or software damage will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Employee Section Only:

Employee's Name (Please Print)

Location

Employee's Signature

Date