



## **Policy for Acceptable Use of Computers and Networks**

Vista School recognizes that communications and other new technologies are shifting the ways that information is accessed, communicated, and transferred by members of our society. These changes also alter instruction and student learning. The school supports access by staff and students to rich information resources, along with the development of appropriate skills to analyze, evaluate, and utilize such resources. Within the school, staff members and students are provided access to electronic information resources over a computer network, which is a part of Vista School. This computer network is supported by the Department of Education, and includes filtered access to the Internet.

Vista School currently provides access to a variety of information resources, including web based curriculum resources via the Internet. Vista School uses Internet filtering processes that are compliant with federal standards including the "Child and Internet Protection Act" (CIPA), and does everything possible to protect your children. These filters are designed and used to protect students (minors), teachers, and administrative staff from harmful material, abuse, and cyber-bullying websites, email, and viruses. Internet access (although filtered) may still lead to resources that may not have been properly screened by educators for use by students of various ages. Vista School cannot guarantee complete protection from inappropriate material. Furthermore, it is impossible for the school or content filter to reflect each individual or family's opinions of what constitutes "inappropriate material." Families should be aware that certain material accessible over public networks might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. Vista School supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not their child will have access to resources via the Internet. If a student mistakenly accesses "inappropriate material", he/she should immediately notify a school staff member.

Students must complete a safety-training course provided by Vista School before they can use the Internet each year. This course will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.

Use of school systems, including Internet use, email messages, and conferences are not considered private and may be monitored by school staff and subject to open records requests.

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### **Computer Network / Internet Rules**

The purpose of the computer network is to further the learning of students in the school. Access to the computer network, and through its Internet resources, is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Use of the computer network is a privilege, not a right. Access requires responsible and lawful use. Parental permission is required for students to have independent access to resources via the Internet. Responsible use means that everyone has a part:

1. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on school computers and networks just as they are in a classroom or in a school hallway. General school rules for behavior apply. Specific guidelines for computer may also exist for individual classrooms or computer labs. If a student is in doubt about whether a computer related behavior is permitted, it is her/his responsibility to ask a teacher or other staff member. Students are also responsible for reporting improper use to a staff member.
  2. Parents and guardians are responsible for supervision of Internet use outside school, and for setting and conveying standards that their children should follow when using electronic resources.
  3. It is the responsibility of each user to employ the computer network in support of education and research consistent with the goals and objectives of Vista School.
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### **Acceptable uses of Computer Networks**

Students will use electronic information resources to:

- Access global educational resources
- Broaden their research capabilities by using primary sources
- Develop higher level thinking skills
- Differentiate and evaluate available sources of information
- Gain essential skills needed for the 21st century
- Turn in assignments, collaboration on assignments, and communication of assignments
- Accessing assignments that are online

### **Unacceptable uses of Computer Networks**

The following behaviors are examples of unacceptable uses of computer equipment and are not permitted. This list is not intended to include every prohibited behavior.

- Sending, receiving, or displaying offensive messages or pictures, including ethnic or gender related slurs or jokes
- Sending spam messages, unwanted, or solicited messages to a group of people not for school purposes.
- Using computer resources for purposes without clear educational value
- Threatening, harassing, insulting, or attacking others
- Damaging computers or any items relating to computer systems, either physically or by intentionally altering software with viruses, "worms," or similar methods
- Violating copyright laws or revealing trade secrets
- Using another person's password, disclosing one's own password to others, or impersonating someone else
- Trespassing in another person's folders, work, or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources (such as network bandwidth, disk space, and/or consumables)
- Using computing resources for non school-related commercial purposes and/or transactions
- Using computing resources for illegal purposes
- Users shall not attempt to bypass or disable Vista School content filters

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### **Consequences**

- a) Violations may result in loss of access.
- b) Additional disciplinary action may be determined with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
- c) When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involve