

EMPLOYEE COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE RULES

The intent of these School Committee-level rules is to provide employees with general requirements for utilizing the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services. The School Committee rules may be supplemented by more specific administrative procedures and rules governing day-to-day management and operation of the computer system.

These rules provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses for illustrative purposes but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Employees who have questions regarding whether a particular activity or use is acceptable should seek further guidance from the system administrator.

Failure to comply with School Committee Policy GCSA, these rules and/or other established procedures or rules governing computer use may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Illegal uses of the school unit's computers will also result in referral to law enforcement authorities.

A. Access to School Computers, Networks and Internet Services

The level of access that employees have to school unit computers, networks and Internet services is based upon specific employee job requirements and needs.

Laptops other than those provided by the MLTI will only be provided to employees required to frequently work away from the office/classroom. Staff provided with laptops will be required to complete a release form and comply with maintenance guidelines.

Employees will be provided access to either a desktop or a laptop, but not both, unless prior approval and justification have been provided to employee's supervisor and the Information Service Department.

Employees needing computer hardware other than what is stated above must request such hardware from the Information Service Department. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the hardware-purchasing budget.

B. Acceptable Use

Employee access to the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services is provided for administrative, educational, communication and research purposes consistent with the school unit's educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals. General rules and expectations for professional behavior and communication apply to the use of the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services. Employees are to utilize the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services for school-related purposes and performance of job duties. Incidental personal use of school computers is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, with system operations or other system users. "Incidental personal use" is defined as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications. Employees are reminded that such personal use must comply with this policy

and all other applicable policies, procedures and rules.

Staff are strongly encouraged to pursue work habits that address and approach a “paperless” model. The IS Department will assist in this endeavor.

No outside equipment may be plugged into the district’s network without prior permission from the Information Service Department. This would include, but not be limited to, personal laptops or handheld devices.

Computer accessories and equipment not explicitly defined by this policy are prohibited without prior permission from the Information Service Department. This would include, but not be limited to, USB memory sticks or external CD/DVD devices.

C. Prohibited Use

The employee is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school unit computers, networks and Internet services and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. General examples of unacceptable uses which are expressly prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Any use that is illegal or in violation of other School Committee policies, including harassing, discriminatory or threatening communications and behavior, violations of copyright laws, etc;
2. Any use involving materials that are obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive;
3. Any inappropriate communications with students or minors;
4. Any use for private financial gain; or commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes unless approved pursuant to other specific School Committee policy(ies) that may be applicable.
5. Any use as a forum for communicating by e-mail or any other medium with other school users or outside parties to solicit, proselytize, advocate or communicate the views of an individual or non-school-sponsored organization; to solicit membership in or support of any non-school-sponsored organization or to raise funds for any non-school-sponsored purpose, whether for-profit or not-for-profit. No employee shall knowingly provide school e-mail addresses to outside parties whose intent is to communicate with school employees, students and/or their families for non-school purposes. Employees who are uncertain as to whether particular activities are acceptable should seek further guidance from the building principal or other appropriate administrator.
6. Any communication that represents personal views as those of the school unit or that could be misinterpreted as such;
7. Downloading or loading software or applications without permission from the system administrator or designated building computer coordinator;
8. Opening or forwarding any e-mail attachments (executable files) from unknown sources and/or that may contain viruses;
9. Sending mass e-mails to school users or outside parties for school or non-school purposes without the permission of the system administrator or other designated administrator;

10. Promoting chain e-mail messages is prohibited;
11. Sending excessive e-mail messages for the purpose of filling a user's disk space or to annoy a user is prohibited;
12. Any malicious use or disruption of the school unit's computers, networks and Internet services or breach of security features;
13. Any misuse or damage to the school unit's computer equipment;
14. Misuse of the computer passwords or accounts (employee's or other user's);
15. Any communications that are in violation of generally accepted rules of network etiquette and/or professional conduct;
16. Any attempt to access unauthorized sites, including Internet (or blocked Internet sites);
17. Failing to report a known breach of computer security to the system administrator;
18. Using school computers, networks and Internet services after such access has been denied or revoked;
19. Any attempt to delete, erase or otherwise conceal any information stored on a school computer that violates these rules.

D. No Expectation of Privacy

The school unit retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by the school unit. The school unit reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by employees and other system users. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including e-mail messages and stored files.

E. Confidentiality of Information

Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.

F. Staff Responsibilities to Students

Teachers, staff members and volunteers who utilize school computers for instructional purposes with students have a duty of care to supervise such use. Teachers, staff members and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the Windham School Department's policies and rules concerning student computer and Internet use and to enforce them. When, in the course of their duties, employees/volunteers become aware of student violations, they are expected to stop the activity and inform the building principal or district network administrator.

G. Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

The employee shall be responsible for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school unit related to violations of policy GCSA and/or these rules.

H. School Unit Assumes No Responsibility for Unauthorized Charges, Costs or Illegal Use

The Windham School Department assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by employees but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

Cross Reference: GCSA – Employee Computer and Internet Use
IJND – School Web Policy
IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use Policy

Adopted: April 28, 2004