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## Technology Acceptable Use Policy

*Policy Code: 3225*

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### **Introduction**

Franklin County Schools is committed to providing reliable, equitable access to technology resources including computers, Internet, electronic mail, and other telecommunication and technology equipment to both staff and students to:

- support the North Carolina Standard Course of Study,
- promote education excellence in 21st Century skills by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication,
- enhance and extend learning opportunities, and
- provide for efficient communications between users.

Technology resources are now integral in meeting the educational curriculum, completing day-to-day work responsibilities, and communicating with the community. All users must comply with this policy, and as such, all users are responsible for their actions and activities involving computers and/or other technical resources.

### **Ethics**

In accordance with the North Carolina State Law, the general ethics standard requires that any use of a state resource other than official state business purposes needs to be brief in duration and frequency to ensure there is little or no cost to the state and the use does not interfere with the performance of official duties or classroom work. This applies to all technology resources including computers, personal e-mail and Internet use by employees, parents, and/or students. The use of Franklin County Schools' computers and other technology resources for personal profit is a violation of North Carolina State Law.

### **Monitoring**

FCS network administrators, school administrators, teachers, and staff will actively monitor the use of computers and other technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and/or disclose any data found on any and all computers and or other technology resources owned by Franklin County Schools. Franklin County Schools will provide reasonable precaution to limit access to controversial and/or offensive materials by using content filtering software and by providing students with adult supervision.

**Network Security**

Franklin County Schools will provide reasonable precautions to provide network and Internet security by use of a firewall, Internet filtering, anti-virus software, and anti-spam software. Due to the nature of the K-12 educational environment, the Franklin County Schools network is not a highly secure network, and as such, the following personal use is not recommended by employees or students:

- online personal banking,
- use of personal credit cards for online purchases,
- transmission of any personal information.

All Franklin County Schools business related files should be stored on network servers and not on local computer hard drives to provide additional security, backup, and disaster recovery. Confidential files should be stored only on network servers and should not be transmitted by electronic mail or posted to any web servers.<sup>1</sup>

**School Records**

As with other school records, electronic data files are subject to disclosure to law enforcement, government officials, or to third parties through subpoena or other lawful process. The Franklin County Schools Board of Education reserves the right to disclose employee or student electronic mail, Internet records, and data files without notification to or permission from the employees or student sending, receiving, or storing the material.

**Software**

All software used on Franklin County Schools' equipment will be subject to license restrictions. Only legal software licensed to Franklin County Schools, except as authorized by the software vendor in writing, will be installed on computers owned by Franklin County Schools. Teachers, students, and parents are expressly prohibited from downloading from the Internet and/or installing any software programs on any networked or stand-alone computer in Franklin County Schools. All applications needing installation must go through an approval process by the Technology Department for legality of license, ability to run safely on the Franklin County Schools' network, and the educational/business value of the software. Borrowing of software from others is prohibited.

**Vandalism**

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to change, harm or destroy computer or other technology equipment owned by Franklin County Schools or destroy the data of another user. This includes, but is not limited to:

- damage to the physical parts of equipment
- changing of computer configuration settings

- circumventing safety configurations
- uploading, creating, and/or transmission of a computer virus
- setting of inappropriate desktop backgrounds
- hacking, theft, or unauthorized intrusion of a computer or intentional modification of computer software code.

**Electronic Mail (Email)**

Franklin County Schools issued email (students and staff) will be used in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner. The use of the email must be in support of Federal, State, and Local educational goals.

Electronic mail is subject to North Carolina Freedom of Information laws and as such is archived for seven years. Authorized staff and student users have no right or expectation of privacy in material stored, accessed, or transmitted on Franklin County Schools' computers and other technology resources. All employees conducting Franklin County Schools business are required to use their Franklin County Schools account to conduct school business. Employees and students should not use their Franklin County Schools account to conduct personal business. Employee and student Internet mail accessed on Franklin County School computers is also subject to monitoring and disclosure.

Students and employees should not open or forward any high risk unsolicited electronic mail, such as jokes, advertisements for free merchandise, photos/pictures, or inheritances.

Use of email for any illegal or commercial activity is prohibited.

**A responsible e-mail user will:**

- use language considered appropriate
- show courtesy to others
- send information that other users will not find offensive
- never reveal personal information about any user such as address, telephone number, credit card numbers, social security number, etc
- never open or forward **high risk, unsolicited** electronic mail, such as jokes, advertisements for free merchandise, photos/pictures, or inheritances
- not send bullying or harassing e-mails (see FCS Policy 1710)

**A responsible e-mail user must be aware that:**

- e-mail is **not guaranteed to be private**; administrators reserve the right to search at any time
- FCS Technology Department will monitor email for threatening and inappropriate key words and phrases
- violation of this policy will result in appropriate punishments under the FCS Code of Conduct and FCS Employee Handbook.
- persons issued an account are responsible for their use at all times

**Parents who have concerns with their child or children having access to electronic mail may request a conference with the school principal or designee to discuss their concerns. However, please keep in mind this instructional strategy is in line with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning standards.**

### **Unacceptable Use**

The following are unacceptable uses of district technology resources. This list does not reflect every possible unacceptable use, but attempts to provide a framework for activities, which fall into the category of unacceptable use.

- engaging in activities that violate federal, state, or local laws or Student/Employee conduct codes (gambling, Copyright infringement, gang violence, hate literature, etc)
- accessing, displaying, or transmitting material of threatening, obscene, discriminating, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, disrespectful, or pornographic materials,
- harassing, bullying, insulting, or attacking others,
- playing of non-educational local or internet games,
- posting information that could be disruptive, cause damage, or endanger students or staff,
- posting false or defamatory information about a person, school, or organization,
- posting, use, and uploading or downloading of unauthorized copyrighted material including software and music,
- forwarding confidential communications without the author's prior consent,
- promoting and posting of religious, political, and/or commercial information,
- attempting to gain unauthorized access to computer or internet resources including the use of another person's username and password or internet proxies to bypass blocked internet sites,
- unauthorized access or destruction of electronic data files,
- wastefully using computer and other technology resources for personal purposes (file space, distribution of mass electronic mail messages and jokes, excessive bandwidth consumption, participating in chain letter, creation of and participation in unauthorized newsgroups, and storage of electronic data files without proper authorization),
- and modifying infrastructure or attaching unauthorized equipment including personal laptops, smartphones, tablets, wireless access points and broadband modems, or network monitoring devices with the intent to bypass district filtering software or to connect to district equipment (projectors, computers, etc.) without previous permission.

**Training**

Prior to receiving a network user name and password, all Franklin County School employees must review the FCS Acceptable Use Policy. This may be done as a group or individually, and should be repeated once per year before the start of each school year. In addition, users will receive reminders on their user accounts multiple times during the school year requiring them to acknowledge electronically their understanding of the FCS Acceptable Use Policy.

A teacher or administrator must review the FCS Acceptable Use Policy with all students and review consequences of violations. This will occur prior to receiving a student network user name and password for older students. This may also be done as a group or individually and should be repeated once per year at the beginning of each school year. In addition, users will receive reminders on their user accounts multiple times during the school year requiring them to acknowledge electronically their understanding of the FCS Acceptable Use Policy.

All teachers should provide age appropriate training annually in the proper and ethical use of technology, according to the North Carolina Computer and Information Skills Standard Course of Study available at: <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/> .

**Consequences**

Students violating this policy shall face disciplinary action as defined by Franklin County Schools' Student Code of Conduct, restitution of costs incurred through damage, including loss and/or repair, limitation or cancellation of user privileges, and criminal prosecution.

Teachers and all other staff who violate this policy may face disciplinary actions ranging from a letter of reprimand to termination; restitution of cost incurred through damage, including loss and/or repair, limitation or cancellation of user privileges, and/or criminal prosecution.

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**Footnotes:** <sup>1</sup>Refer to Policy 3240 for additional information.

**Legal References:** US Const. amend. I; 17 U.S.C. 100 et seq.; Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2522; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; G.S. 115C-391,-325(e)

**Cross Reference:** Parental Involvement (policy 1310), Curriculum and Instructional Guides (policy 3115), Technology in the Educational Program (3220), Copyright Complaint (policy 3230), Standards of Expected Student Behavior (policy 4310), Public Records (policy 5070), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300)

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