



## **Diocese of Trenton Acceptable Use of Technology Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy provides the procedures, rules, guidelines and codes of conduct for the use of the internet, social media, email and similar applications. Use of such technology is a necessary element of the mission of Catholic schools, and is provided to users as a privilege, not a right. Schools seek to protect, encourage, and enhance the legitimate uses of technology by placing fair limitations on such use and sanctions for those who abuse the privilege.

### **SUMMARY**

Technology that includes but is not limited to computers, wireless & LAN access, electronic mail, internet access, and all other forms of instructional, networking and electronic communication tools are provided as a service by the school to users. Users are required to be good technology citizens by refraining from activities that disrupt education, or can be considered unethical, illegal, immoral, and/or unprofessional conduct.

The user is responsible for his/her actions in accessing internet, social media, email and similar applications, whether through school-owned hardware or through personal hardware (including pc's, laptops, and cellphones) that use the school network, Wi-Fi, or hotspots. Failure to comply with the guidelines of technology use may result in the loss of privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action. Severe violations may result in civil or criminal action under the New Jersey Statutes or Federal Law.

### **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Given the dynamic nature of technological advancements and the wide spectrum of resources available on the internet, the school acknowledges its inability to completely regulate and monitor the information received or sent by users, although appropriate filters are used. The school cannot assure parents that users will be denied access to all inappropriate materials or prohibited from sending or receiving communications contrary to the school's philosophy, goals, and educational mission.

Parents or guardians should be aware that some material accessible via the internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, offensive and/or inconsistent with the teachings of Catholic schools. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet that could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent or guardian will be held responsible.

## **GUIDELINES**

- Access to computers, networks and devices within the school network is a privilege and must be treated as such by all users.
- The network will be used solely for the purpose of research, education, and school-related business and operations.
- Computer systems shall only be used by the authorized user's user account. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account.
- All communications and information accessible and accessed via the school system is and shall remain property of the school.
- Student use of school equipment shall be supervised and monitored by authorized staff. Student use must be related to the school curriculum.
- The internet, social media, email and similar applications are to be used primarily for school purposes. The occasional use of such technology for personal purposes is permitted provided it is not abusive, excessive or violative of this policy.
- Any defects or knowledge of suspected abuse of the school systems, networks, security, hardware, or software shall be reported to the Technology Director.

## **THE SCHOOL'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In order to ensure a safe, efficient and secure school environment, the school reserves the right to monitor, inspect and review all internet, social media, email and similar uses by users and perform random scans on the user's computer as well as any network devices to ensure the internet access, social media and/or email systems provided to users are not abused or used for purposes contrary to the school's Catholic teachings and educational mission. This includes personal web-based emails accessed and stored using the school's equipment and/or computer systems. Users should have no expectation of privacy in any information stored, sent, received or accessed on the school's equipment and/or computer systems. Schools will ensure that all computer technology users complete and sign an agreement to abide by the school's acceptable use policy. School administrators must both give permission for and be given the access capability to any school-affiliated social media pages created by teachers or staff members.

## **UNACCEPTABLE USE**

Examples of unacceptable use activities include, but are not limited to, any activity through which a user:

- Interferes with or disrupts other users, services, or equipment, or destroys, alters, dismantles, disfigures, or otherwise interferes with the integrity of computer-based information resources, whether on stand-alone or networked computers. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of advertising and propagation of computer viruses or worms.
- Attempts to disable, bypass, or otherwise circumvent the school's content filter that has been installed in accordance with the federal Children's Internet Protection Act. This includes but is not limited to the use of proxy servers and cellular hotspots.
- Seeks to gain or gains unauthorized access to information resources or confidential records, obtains copies of, or modifies files or other data, or gains and communicates passwords belonging to other users.
- Installs unauthorized software or material for use on school hardware.
- Uses the systems for illegal, harassing, vandalizing, inappropriate, obscene purposes, or in support of such activities, or in violation of any school policy.
- Accessing or transmitting material which promotes violence, hatred, or advocates the destruction of property including information concerning the manufacture of destructive devices.
- Accessing or transmitting material which advocates the use, purchase, or sale of illegal goods or services.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Users who violate this policy will be subject to revocation of system access up to and including permanent loss of privileges, and discipline up to and including expulsion or termination of employment. Violations of law may be reported to the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Trenton and law enforcement officials.