

Nacogdoches Independent School District

Electronic Communications Acceptable Use Policy

Please read this document carefully before signing.

Computer Use and Data Management

Electronic communications are now available to students, teachers, administrators and staff in the Nacogdoches Independent School District. Electronic communications services include e-mail, Internet access, local and wide-area networks, video conferencing and any other resources available through the use of the District's network.

We are very pleased to offer this service to Nacogdoches Independent School District and believe electronic communications offer vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing and innovative communication.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers and millions of individual subscribers. Subscribers have access to:

- a) Electronic mail communication,
- b) Information and news from numerous resources with the opportunity to correspond with research institutions,
- c) Public domain software and shareware of all types,
- d) Discussion groups on numerous topics,
- e) Access to many University Library Catalogs and the Library of Congress.

Networks are groups of people and computers who share information and services. Networks can share information and services within a location (school), within an organization (NISD), and worldwide through the Internet.

With access to computers comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Nacogdoches Independent School District has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial information with the use of filtering/blocking software according to CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) signed into law on December 21, 2000. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information. The valuable information and interaction available on this network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District.

Electronic communications is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, regional, state and local networks. In addition, the smooth operation of all electronic communications relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so those users are aware of the responsibilities they are about to acquire. In general this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of all electronic resources. If a Nacogdoches Independent School District user violates any of these provisions, his or her account may be terminated and/or limited, and future access could possibly be denied. Violations will be dealt with according to District, State and/or Federal policies and laws.

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Electronic Communications Terms and Conditions

1) **Acceptable Use** - The purpose of providing electronic communications is to support education and research by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the Nacogdoches ISD. Use of electronic resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that resource. Transmission of material in violation of U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, pornography, or material protected by trade secret. Also prohibited are illegal access to computers or networks (“hacking”), commercial activities, product advertisement, personal advertising, chain letters, and political/religious lobbying.

2) **Privileges** — The use of electronic communications is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation or restriction of those privileges. Each person who receives an account or uses District network resources agrees to the terms and conditions of the Electronic Communications Policy. All electronic communications, including, but not limited to, e-mail, Internet activity and network resources may be monitored at any time by the system administrators. No electronic communications activity using District resources is considered private. The system administrators will routinely perform maintenance and monitoring of the system that may lead to the discovery that a user has violated policy or law. Additionally, an individualized search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated a policy or law.

Activities in violation of state or federal laws will be reported to the appropriate authorities. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use. Also, the system administrators may close an account at any time as required.

3) **Network Etiquette** — Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited) to the following:

- a) Be polite. Do not get abusive in messages to others.
- b) Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language, as accepted by community standards. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- c) Do not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers or those of students or colleagues.
- d) Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.
- e) Do not use electronic resources in such a way that would disrupt their use by others.
- f) Do not attempt to gain access to locations on networks where specific privileges have not been given.
- g) All communications and information accessible via electronic communications should be assumed to be copyrighted unless otherwise stated.
- h) Downloading software will not be allowed on district hardware without permission from the Technology Department (this includes instant messaging)
- i) Mass mailing and participating in chat rooms are prohibited unless approved by Technology Department

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4) **Warranties** — Nacogdoches ISD makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Nacogdoches ISD will not be responsible for any damages. This includes loss of data resulting from delay, nondelivery, misdelivery, or service interruption caused by the District's own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at user's own risk. Nacogdoches ISD specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the network.

5) **Security** — Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If a user can identify a security problem on the network, the user must notify a system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the network as another user will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network. All computers can be monitored at any time by the Technology Department.

6) **Purchases** — Users are solely responsible for services, memberships or merchandise purchased through the District's access to electronic communications. The Nacogdoches Independent School District shall not be a party to such transactions or be liable for any costs or damages arising out of, either directly or indirectly, such actions.

7) **Telephone Charges** — Users may not incur long distance phone charges. Nacogdoches Independent School District assumes no responsibility or liability for any phone charges including, but not limited to, long distance charges, per minute (unit) surcharges and/or equipment or line costs, incurred by the user. Any disputes or problems regarding phone service are strictly between the user and his or her local phone company and/or long distance provider.

8) **Vandalism** — Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment or data of another user, the network, or through electronic communications. This includes, but is not limited, to, uploading or creating computer viruses, gaining illegal access to a computer or network or altering electronic information belonging to others.

9) **Damages** — The user specifically agrees to reimburse the Nacogdoches Independent School District and the system administrators for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorneys' fees incurred by the Nacogdoches Independent School District and the system administrators relating to, or arising out of any breach of the electronic communications policy by the user.

10) **Antivirus Software** — A computer virus is a malicious program that can attach itself to executable files and operating system files on both floppy and hard disks. Viruses can destroy data and in some cases damage hardware. Viruses are spread by sharing files, disks, and by downloading programs from the Internet or E-mail. Antivirus software is provided for every computer on the Nacogdoches Independent School District's network. This software must not be disabled or tampered with by the user. Virus attacks should be reported to the Technology Department. Intentionally introducing or spreading a virus will be considered vandalism and will result in the cancellation of privileges.

11) **Laptop Computers** - Laptop computers, which were not purchased by the Nacogdoches Independent School District, may not be connected to the District's network or phone lines without the express permission of the Director of Technology Services.

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This page must be signed and returned to your campus or department!

STUDENT/EMPLOYEE

I understand and will voluntarily abide by the Nacogdoches ISD Internet Use Policy. I further understand that violation of the policy is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. Signature(s) at the end of this document indicate that I/we have read the Nacogdoches ISD Network/Internet Use Policy carefully, understand its significance, and agree to comply fully with all terms and conditions therein.

User Name (printed): _____ Date _____

User Signature: _____

Campus/Department: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Internet Use Policy. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for Nacogdoches ISD to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SPONSORING TEACHER

(Must be signed if the applicant is a **student**)

I have read the Internet Use Policy and agree to promote this policy with the student. Because the student may use the network for individual work or in the context of another class, I cannot be held responsible for the student use of the network. As the sponsoring teacher I do agree to instruct the student on acceptable use of the network and proper network etiquette.

Teacher's Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____