

**TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOLS  
ELECTRONIC RESOURCES, TECHNOLOGIES  
AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY  
(AUP)  
July 1, 2020**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This document formalizes the policy for users of Taylor County Schools' network and access to the Internet via West Virginia Network for Educational Tele computing (WVNET). All users, including students, teachers, administrators, staff, substitute personnel, and educational organizations are covered by this policy and are expected to be familiar with its provisions.

Access to the Internet will provide students and educators with:

- a. Electronic mail communication
- b. Information and news services
- c. Public domain and software of all types
- d. Discussion groups on a variety of subjects
- e. Connections to many libraries, companies, agencies and businesses
- f. Virtual courses and educational resources
- g. Online staff development
- h. Electronic educational tools and e-learning platforms.

With connections to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of materials that may not be considered to be of appropriate educational value. On a global network, it is impossible to completely restrict access to controversial materials. It is the responsibility of the student, parent, teacher and administrator to ensure that access to telecommunication networks and computers provided by the school system is not abused and that all users treat one another with respect.

## **2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

**The use of the Internet as part of an educational program is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.** Each student who will access the Internet will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response. This is accomplished through the program Common Sense Media. Based upon acceptable use of guidelines outlined in this document, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and WVNET system administrators and Taylor County Schools' will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. **Also, system administrators and/or local teachers/administrators may deny user access at any time as necessary.** As the use of telecommunication networks by students and educators increase, there is a need to clarify acceptable use and safety of those networks and to include federal regulations. Computer and Internet usage in Taylor County Schools' must be consistent with the educational objectives of each school, Taylor County Board of Education, and the WVDE. This policy and all computer use must be in compliance with West Virginia Board of Education (WVBOE) Policy 2460, Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Access to the Internet is provided as a privilege to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state law regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Use for commercial activities by for-profit institutes is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited. Illegal activities are strictly prohibited.

## **3. PARENTAL CONSENT**

Students must have written parental consent to use this system, network, and Internet. A parent may rescind his/her consent in writing at any time, subsequently terminating the student's use of this service.

## **4. SECURITY**

Users who identify a security problem on the system must notify a system administrator. Users must not demonstrate the problem to other users. Users must not use another user's account or give their password to others. Attempts to log into any system as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges and may result in other disciplinary action. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access. WVDE and Taylor County Schools' provide filtering, but no system can totally filter unacceptable materials. Users assume responsibility for responsible use of the Internet and self-monitoring of materials accessed.

## **5. USER RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of any person using Taylor County Schools' network or Internet to read, understand, and follow these guidelines. In addition, users are expected to exercise reasonable judgment in making decisions about the appropriate use of network and Internet resources. Any person with questions regarding the application or meaning of these guidelines should seek clarification from his or her administrator and/or the Director of Technology for Taylor County Schools. Use of Taylor County resources shall constitute acceptance of the terms of these guidelines.

### **A. EDUCATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of educators who are using Taylor County Schools' network devices with students to teach students about safe and responsible use of the Internet and network. Educators are responsible for monitoring students' use of these resources, and to intervene if students are using them inappropriately. Educators should make sure that students understand and abide by the Acceptable Use Policy as stated in this document. If an educator has reason to believe that a student is misusing the system, he or she has the right to request that Taylor County Schools access the student's account in order to review the use of Taylor County network devices by the student. It is also the responsibility of the teacher to report any misuse of the system to his/her administrator and/or the Director of Technology directly.

### **B. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of students who are using Taylor County Schools' network devices to learn about safe and responsible use of the Internet and network. They are responsible to use these resources appropriately. They must abide by the Acceptable Use Policy as stated in this document. If a student is misusing the system, educators in the district have the right to discontinue his/her use of the system and/or to impose further disciplinary action (See Taylor County Schools' Policy 5600 – Student Discipline) up to and including suspension or expulsion

### **C. ACCEPTABLE USES AND BEHAVIOR**

The purpose of the Internet and school network is to support research and education in and among academic institutions in the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. Students are responsible for proper behavior and communication on the Internet just as they are in a school building. General school rules for behavior and communication apply for computer and Internet usage. District/school equipment that is used off site is subject to the same rules as when used on site. Specific examples of acceptable use from state and local policies include, but are not limited to:

1. Use must be in support of education and research consistent with county and state policies for academic use.
2. All student use of Internet must be under the supervision of a teacher/administrator, without exception.
3. Training will be provided for individuals accessing the Internet and this Acceptable Use Policy, signed by parent/guardian, student, and teacher, will be on file.
4. Use must be consistent with the school's rules for computers and networks.
5. WVDE K-12 E-mail accounts are provided as an instructional tool rather than a personal email address or forum.
6. Comply with fair-use laws and other copyright regulations while accessing and utilizing the Internet and other network materials and resources. Software may be copied if it is clearly identified as shareware, in the public domain, or with written permission of the copyright owner.
7. Users must be polite and considerate of others.
8. If a security problem is identified, notify the system administrator immediately.
9. Users may be occasionally required to update registration, password, and account information in order to continue Internet access.

## **D. UNACCEPTABLE USES AND BEHAVIOR**

The resources available to Taylor County Schools' users are to be used for educational purposes, as noted above. In the interest of helping users understand inappropriate use, the following list clarifies what users should not do:

1. Respect yourself and other Internet users while being SAFE online
  - Users will not reveal personal information about themselves or others.
  - Users will not use, send, or display hate mail, forwards (FWD:), harassing or discriminatory remarks, or other antisocial communications (cyberbullying).
  - Users will not intentionally seek information on/obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users; do not misrepresent other users on the network or impersonate someone else online.
  - Users will not access or share sexually explicit (including nude or semi-nude images of yourself or others), obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials-including sexting and inappropriate SMS/MMS messages.
  - Do not intercept communications intended for other persons or log in through another person's account or attempt to access another user's password or files (identity theft/hacking).
  - Do not send hurtful or untrue (defamatory or libelous) materials concerning a person or group of people
  - ("sexting", inappropriate SMS/MMS messages)
  - Users will not participate in cyber bullying: the act of making personal attacks or threats against anyone.
  - Any illegal activities are prohibited.
2. Use technology for instructional/educational purposes
  - Students should use technology for school-related purposes only during the instructional day.
  - Students can access collaborative networking sites under the direct supervision of a teacher or administrator.
  - Students can access voice and video live communications, relay chat, (Skype, Gmail, etc) only under the direct supervision of a teacher or administrator
3. Be careful of what you download from the Internet
  - Do not use the Internet in any way that could disrupt the use of the Internet by other users (e.g., downloading large files during prime usage time, sending mass email messages, annoying other users, peer-to-peer file sharing.)
  - Do not use the network to download entertainment software or other files not related to the mission and objectives of Taylor County Schools.
  - Do not download, upload, distribute, or install unauthorized software (including shareware and freeware), files, or any other materials that are not specifically related to an educational project or in violation of federal copyright laws.
4. Be responsible about technical equipment and network usage
  - Do not allow for-profit institutions to use the network or internet for commercial activities (fundraising on school sites, links to websites with ads)
  - Do not use the Internet or network to further any political or religious purpose
  - Do not gain unauthorized access to computers or telecommunication networks
  - Do not interfere with the operation of technology resources, including placing a computer virus on any computer system, including the network system
  - Do not use the internet for personal business
  - Do not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the network system
  - Do not vandalize any technology equipment which is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or any connections or equipment that are part of the internet.

As with any other form of communication, these systems may not be used to transmit or store messages or other data that are inappropriate under existing WVDE or district policies such as those prohibiting sexual harassment. Users may not create, send, or store messages or other data that are considered offensive, contain sexually explicit materials, or otherwise offensively address the age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability of a person or group of people. Users also may not create, send, or store messages, pertaining to dangerous devices such as weaponry or explosive devices. Users should take all reasonable precautions against receiving or downloading messages, images, or other data of this sort.

## 6. NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

Taylor County Schools retains the right to inspect any user's Virtual Hard Drive (VHD) and the files it contains. Taylor County Schools' also has the right to give permission to the teachers, the school administrators, and the parents of any student to review the use of Taylor County tools by a student whom they think may be misusing the system. Users are advised that messages in discussion forums, including deleted messages, are regularly archived and can be retrieved. In addition, an Internet firewall automatically checks all data moving between the local area network and the Internet and logs the sending and receiving destinations. Monitoring software may be used to periodically monitor computers by all users. Use of Taylor County Schools' technology resources constitutes consent for the Taylor County Schools' staff to monitor and/or inspect any files that users create, any messages they post or receive, and any web sites they access.

## 7. PASSWORDS

Each user shall be required to use and maintain a password that was created according to Taylor County Schools' guidelines if a password is provided. This password is used to access the Taylor County Schools computer network and any resources that reside within the network and require password access. The users must take precautions to maintain the secrecy of their password so that other users will not be able to utilize that password for malicious purposes. If a user suspects that someone has discovered the user's password, the user should change the password immediately. Users will be held accountable for all activity that takes place under their password.

## 8. VIOLATIONS/SANCTIONS

**Failure to observe these guidelines may subject users to termination of their Taylor County Schools' accounts and/or Internet and network access privileges. Failure to observe guidelines may also result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or expulsion from school. Taylor County Schools' will also advise law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through Taylor County Schools' resources and will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through Taylor County Schools' resources.**

## 9. DISCLAIMERS/CONCLUSIONS

- A. Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (18 USC 2510 et seq.), notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by this system for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. System administrators have access to all mail and will monitor messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- B. WVDE, WVNET and Taylor County Schools' will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by your own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained is at your own risk.
- C. WVDE, WVNET and Taylor County Schools' make no warranties (expressed or implied) with regard to any costs or charges incurred as a result of seeing or accepting any information and any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the user chooses to use his or her access to the network.
- D. WVDE, WVNET, and Taylor County Schools' deny any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the system.
- E. WVDE, WVNET and Taylor County Schools' reserve the right to change its policies and rules at any time.
- F. All provisions of this agreement are subordinate to local, state and federal statutes.
- G. This policy is in compliance with state and federal telecommunications rules and regulations.

## NETWORK POLICIES AND MISCELLANEOUS TECHNOLOGY USE

All technology guidelines are designed to maximize time on task, protecting the emphasis on academics and the prescribed curriculum. These guidelines also protect the integrity of the teaching and learning process. With this in mind, Taylor County Schools' offers clarification on specific issues as follows:

### CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Educators will educate students about responsible behavior, and students will assume responsibility for Internet and network use that demonstrates respect for themselves and others. Any conduct that meets the definition of "harassment, intimidation or bullying" that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or emotionally abusive educational environment for a student; or disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school shall be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurs on school property, at a school sponsored function, occurs during school time, or, involves the use of school property, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### GAMING

Use of the Internet and network system will be for educational purposes. Games not related to instructional objectives will not be accessed during the school day. Teachers and administrators will be responsible for monitoring Internet and network use and ensuring that access is for the purpose of furthering instructional goals.

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2460> The full 2460 policy may be accessed here.

**ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT**

School / Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENTS:**

As a user of the Taylor County Schools computer network, I have read (or it has been explained to me) and agree to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) Agreement. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be temporarily or permanently revoked and disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including suspension/expulsion. I understand that commission of any crime via Internet falls under State and Federal authority.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF MINORS:**

As a parent or legal guardian of the above signed student, I have read this Acceptable Use Policy. I grant permission for him/her to access networked computer services such as electronic mail (E-mail) and the Internet for educational purposes. I understand that he/she is expected to use good judgment and to follow rules, policies, and classroom guidelines in making contact on school telecommunication networks (e.g., the Internet). I understand that Taylor County Schools and the West Virginia Department of Education have taken precautions to minimize objectionable material. However, I recognize it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials. When using the Internet, I realize that students might read material, including e-mail, that is controversial or offensive. If a violation of this policy occurs, the offending student will be subject to school discipline policy, and if actual laws were broken, possible criminal penalties. I give my permission for this student to access Internet and obtain at no cost a West Virginia Department of Education e-mail account for my child. I voluntarily agree to release, hold harmless, defend, and indemnify Taylor County Schools, its officers, board members, employees and agents, for and against all claims, actions, charges, losses or damages which arise out of the user's use, including, but not limited to negligence, personal injury, wrongful death, property loss or damage, delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries of data, or service interruptions.

These permissions are granted for an indefinite period of time, unless otherwise requested. I understand that individuals and families may be held liable for violations. I understand that some materials on the Internet may be objectionable, but I accept responsibility for guidance of Internet use -- setting and conveying standards for my son or daughter to follow when selecting, sharing or exploring information and media. I have read and discussed the Taylor County Schools Acceptable Use Policy with my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSION FORM FOR WEB/NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING OF STUDENT WORK**

I understand that my child's work or writing may be published on the district's Social Media accounts, or web page at <http://www.taylorcountyboe.net> I further understand that no last name, home address or home telephone number will appear with such work. I grant permission for the above publishing. I may withdraw permission in writing at any time.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSION FORM FOR FACEBOOK/TWITTER/WORLD WIDE WEB/NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING OF STUDENT PHOTOGRAPH**

I understand that my child's photograph may be published on the district's Social Media accounts, or the district's web page at <http://www.taylorcountyboe.net> I further understand that no last name, home address or home telephone number will appear with photographs. I grant permission for the above publishing. I may withdraw permission in writing at any time.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEES & STAFF**

As a user of the Taylor County Schools computer network, I have read and agree to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) Agreement. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be temporarily or permanently revoked and disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including suspension/termination. I understand that commission of any crime via Internet falls under State and Federal authority.

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_