

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

POLICY TITLE: Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy
Adoption September 07, 2011
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Personnel // Technology Amendments:

I. Policy

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to govern and establish guidelines for the use of all technology equipment, software, related materials, electronic communications, and licensed network systems.

B. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Queen Anne's County recognizes that electronic information and technology equipment support and enrich the Queen Anne's County Public Schools (QACPS) curriculum and district educational goals. Technology provides a diverse array of resources that may enhance all students learning abilities within county schools and classrooms.

C. Rationale

The Board of Education of Queen Anne's County acknowledges that educational resources located on computer networks and the Internet can be effective learning tools and motivators for students. Digital learning encourages independent and critical thinking which provide students the ability to contribute to their collection, analysis, and dissemination of knowledge. Moreover, understanding how to responsibly access, utilize and evaluate this wealth of information and effectively communicate, are critical skills for the 21st century. However, the Board of Education also recognizes the vital need for all users to follow specific guidelines and exhibit responsible behavior during utilization of this vast array of technologies. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to establish governing procedures and regulations which all users are required to follow.

D. Definitions

Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy

The overriding policy that governs and establishes guidelines for the use of all technology equipment, software, related materials, electronic communications and licensed network systems.

CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act)

The federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school district that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program.

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COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)

The federal law enacted by Congress that applies to the online collection of personal information by persons or entities under US jurisdiction for children under 13 years of age.

Copyright

The legal device that protects the rights of creators of any work of art, literature, or a work that conveys information or ideas.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is an incident or a pattern of behavior that occurs through electronic mechanisms, which results in a person feeling intimidated or harassed by another. Cyber bullying behavior can impact the health/safety of students and/or be disruptive to the educational environment.

Cyber Stalking

Cyber stalking is the use of the Internet or other electronic means to stalk someone. This behavior includes false accusations, monitoring, the transmission of threats, identity theft, damage to data or equipment, the solicitation of minors for sexual purposes, and gathering information for harassment purposes.

Cyber Threats

Cyber threats include attacks from viruses, worms, Trojan horses, phishing, denial of service attacks, unauthorized access (stealing intellectual property or confidential information), and control system attacks.

Electronic Communication

Any communication that is distributed on the Internet or World Wide Web (WWW) including email, instant messaging, chat, blog posts, etc. **(See Email Procedure)**

Fair Use Guidelines

The four basic guidelines that assist educators determine the scope of use of copyrighted materials within a classroom are;

- purpose of the use,
- nature of the copyrighted work,
- amount or percentage of the work used,
- effect of the use on the original work

Files

A collection of related data or program records stored as a unit with a single name.

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FERPA (Family Educational Rights Privacy Act)

The Federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

MLDs (Mobile Learning Device Policy)

MLD includes but is not limited to computers, portable game units, graphing calculators, touch screens, E-readers and similar electronic devices.

Network etiquette

Recognized protocol that all Internet users should follow when accessing and searching various online resources.

Plagiarizing

The taking of someone else's words, ideas, or findings and intentionally presenting them as your own without giving credit to their source.

Queen Anne's County Public Schools Cell Phone Policy

The policy that governs and establishes guidelines for the cell/smart phones for Queen Anne's County Public School students.

Sexual Discrimination/Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and consists of unwelcome and unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or communication of a sexual nature by another person.

Users

Refers to QACPS employees, students, parents, organizations, or guests accessing and/or using QACPS network computers and resources.

E. Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible for drafting procedural guidelines for the implementation of this policy.

F. Evaluation

The Superintendent will provide the Board of Education a review of this policy in August 2012. The focus of this review will be the effectiveness of this policy in assisting the Board in fulfilling its mission.

G. References

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II. Procedure

A. Disclaimer of Liability

The electronic information available to all users via digital networks does not imply endorsement of the content by the BOEQAC, nor does the BOEQAC guarantee the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Additionally, even though the BOEQAC employs blocking and restriction devices, the BOEQAC cannot guarantee comprehensive control of or censor illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, obscene, or potentially offensive materials that may be transmitted via the Internet or through the network. Furthermore, the BOEQAC shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the network.

The BOEQAC shall not be responsible for the loss or damage of any users' personal technology devices and software that has been brought onto QACPS owned property. (**See Mobile Learning Device Policy**) The BOEQAC shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

B. Authorization

Users have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their files on the system. Furthermore, users shall comply with laws, regulations, and policies covered by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Children's Online Protection and Protection Act (COPPA), and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) when handling student educational records.

Users should be aware that computer files may be accessible under State public records laws and are discoverable in litigation. Information written or transmitted on the network may be read or viewed by any properly authorized individual, organization, or agency.

The BOEQAC establishes that use of digital networks is a privilege, not a right; inappropriate, unauthorized, and illegal use will result in the suspension and or cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

C. Delegation of Responsibility

The BOEQAC will endeavor to ensure that electronic networks, equipment and educational resources are used responsibly. (**See Mobile Learning Device Policy, QACPS Cell Phone Policy, and Student Email Procedures**)

Administrators, teachers and staff have a professional responsibility to work together to assist students develop the intellectual skills necessary to discriminate among information sources, to

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identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use the information to meet their educational goals.

Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the BOEQAC policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and State law.

Users have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user on the BOEQAC digital networks. Therefore, any network user who receives threatening or unwelcomed communications is required to immediately report it to a teacher or administrator

Users must sign the relevant appropriate user agreement form yearly to signify agreement with the term dictated by the BOEQAC within this policy.

D. User Guidelines

Access to all electronic resources on the BOEQAC network is a privilege. Therefore, users must agree to comply with the BOEQAC guidelines. Violations of the AUP include and are not limited to;

- accessing unauthorized network systems and/or assisting others to obtain unauthorized information, data, or passwords,
- unauthorized sharing of personal addresses or telephone numbers with other users on the BOEQAC network,
- utilizing the BOEQAC network for product advertisement, financial gain, or political lobbying,
- disseminating hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication,
- accessing obscene or pornographic material,
- using inappropriate and threatening language, cyber bullying, cyber threats, and cyber stalking on the BOEQAC network,
- impersonating another user, anonymity, and pseudonym,
- loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files or other electronic media,
- disrupting the work of other network users,
- destroying, modifying or abusing network hardware and software,
- plagiarizing or quoting personal communications in a public forum without the original author's prior consent,
- downloading or uploading to the network copyrighted materials that are exempt from "Fair Use" guidelines,
- attempting to bypass network's filtering system,

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- installing unauthorized wiring, wireless connections, or any extension or retransmission of system services.
- Accessing Internet through unauthorized use of tethering and Smart Phone hot spots.

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E. Consequences for Inappropriate Use

Violations may result in loss of access for users violating the Acceptable Use Policy for Queen Anne's County Public Schools. Loss may be short term to permanent.

Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in line with existing practices regarding infractions by users. Intentional damage to the BOEQAC network and/or electronic equipment may result in appropriate restitution. **(See Discipline Policy in Student Handbook).**

When applicable, law enforcement agencies will be notified and individual violators will face possible criminal charges, as well as possible expulsion for students and possible termination of employment for staff members.

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**QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EMPLOYEE USER AGREEMENT**

I have read and understand the Board of Education of Queen Anne's County's Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy and Procedures. I hereby agree to comply with the policy and procedures. I understand that any violation of the policy and procedures may be a violation of law, civil regulations or other BOEQAC policy. Should I violate this policy, my access privileges may be suspended or revoked. School disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may result.

Employee Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Employee

Name _____