

QUEEN ANNE’S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Title: Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronics
Policy No.: 205

Scheduled Reads

1st Read: 11/01/2023
2nd Read: 12/06/2023
Approval: 01/03/2024

Attachment(s): Policy 205: Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronics

AGENDA ITEM FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

 X **Information/Review** *(This is the first reading for this policy before being posted on the school district’s website for the public comment period, after which it will be brought back to the Board for the second reading with any revisions as appropriate.)*

 Second Reading *(This is the second reading for this policy. Edits as a result of public comment are included. Also included are recommended edits by Board members or Administration.)*

 Action *(The Superintendent recommends approval of this Policy subject to final edits for format and style.)*

STAFF PRESENTATION: Matthew Kibler, Ed.D.
FISCAL IMPACT: None BUDGETED: N/A
DOLLAR AMOUNT: N/A BUDGET SOURCE: N/A

SUBJECT:
Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronics

BACKGROUND:
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.

DISCUSSION:
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.

POLICY Board of Education of Queen Anne’s County

Responsible Office:	Deputy Superintendent & Technology Department
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POLICY NAME

I. 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.

II. 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.

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.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. [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.
- B. [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.
- C. [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.

- D. *Copyright* – The legal device that protects the rights of creators of any work of art, literature, or a work that conveys information or ideas.
- E. *Cyber Bullying* – 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.
- F. *Cyber Stalking* – 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.
- G. *Cyber Threats* – These include attacks from viruses, worms, Trojan horses, phishing, denial of service attacks, unauthorized access (stealing intellectual property or confidential information), and control system attacks.
- H. *Electronic Communication* – Any communication that is distributed on the Internet or World Wide Web (WWW) including email, instant messaging, chat, blog posts, **social media**, etc. (See Email Procedure)
- I. *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
- J. *Files* – A collection of related data or program records stored as a unit with a single name.
- K. *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.
- L. *MLDs (Mobile Learning Device Policy)* – Includes, but is not limited to computers, portable game units, graphing calculators, touch screens, E-readers and similar electronic devices.
- M. *Network etiquette* – Recognized protocol that all Internet users should follow when accessing and searching various online resources.
- N. *Plagiarizing* – The taking of someone else’s words, ideas, or findings and intentionally presenting them as your own without giving credit to their source.
- O. *Queen Anne’s County Public Schools-~~Cell Phone Policy~~ Personal Electronic Device Policy* – The policy that that governs and establishes guidelines for **electronic devices**

~~the cell/smart phones~~ for Queen Anne's County Public School students.

- P. *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.
- Q. *Users* – Refers to QACPS employees, students, parents, organizations, or guests accessing and/or using QACPS network computers and resources.

IV. POLICY ELEMENTS

A. Procedure

1. Disclaimer of Liability

- (a) The electronic information available to all users via digital networks does not imply endorsement of the content by the Board, nor does the Board guarantee the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Additionally, even though the BOARD employs blocking and restriction devices, the Board 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 Board shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the network.
- (b) The Board 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 Board shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

2. Authorization

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) The Board 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.

3. Delegation of Responsibility

- (a) The BOARD 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)
- (b) 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 identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use the information to meet their educational goals.
- (c) Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the BOARD policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and State law.
- (d) Users have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user on the BOARD digital networks. Therefore, any network user who receives threatening or unwelcomed communications is required to immediately report it to a teacher or administrator.
- (e) Users must sign the relevant appropriate user agreement form yearly to signify agreement with the term dictated by the BOARD within this policy.

4. User Guidelines

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

- (a) accessing unauthorized network systems and/or assisting others to obtain unauthorized information, data, or passwords;
- (b) unauthorized sharing of personal addresses or telephone numbers with other users on the BOARD network;
- (c) utilizing the BOARD network for product advertisement, financial gain, or political lobbying;
- (d) disseminating hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication;
- (e) accessing obscene or pornographic material, using inappropriate and threatening language, cyber bullying, cyber threats, and cyber stalking on the BOARD network;
- (f) 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;
- (g) destroying, modifying or abusing network hardware and software, plagiarizing or quoting personal communications in a public forum without the original author's prior consent;
- (h) downloading or uploading to the network copyrighted materials that are exempt from "Fair Use" guidelines;

- (i) attempting to bypass network’s filtering system;
 - (j) installing unauthorized wiring, wireless connections, or any extension or retransmission of system services; and/or
 - (k) accessing Internet through unauthorized use of tethering and Smart Phone hot spots.
4. Consequences for Inappropriate Use
- (a) 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.
 - (b) Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in line with existing practices regarding infractions by users. Intentional damage to the BOARD network and/or electronic equipment may result in appropriate restitution. (See Discipline Policy in Student Handbook).
 - (c) 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.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

The Board directs the Superintendent to implement this policy.

III. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every four years.

IV. SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO TITLES, DEPARTMENTS, OR LAWS

[Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks](#)

[Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998, 15 U.S.C. 6501–6505](#)

[FERPA \(Family Educational Rights Privacy Act\)](#)

[Fair Use Guidelines](#)

[Mobile Learning Device Policy](#)

~~[Cell Phone Policy](#)~~

~~[Personal Electronic Device Policy](#)~~

Md. Code Com. Law § 14-3501 et seq.

V. EFFECTIVE DATE

Date:

Patricia W. Saelens, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools

HISTORY:

Initial Adoption	09/07/2011		Revised	04/03/2019 01/03/2024	Reviewed		Next Review	--/--/-- --
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