ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

Computers are valuable tools for education at St. St. Joseph School. The administration/faculty/staff encourage the proper use of computer-related technology including the Internet. Students and all users of computer technology have a responsibility to use these tools properly and in accordance with the policy below. Written consent for the use and access of the Internet and the server will be required in writing for each student and kept on file each new school year.

Goals

- To provide a variety of electronic tools to help students and teachers develop the ability to evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- To enable students to work effectively with various computer/communication technology.
- To encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are needed in an increasingly electronic and global society.

Limits on St. Joseph School Liability

- St. Joseph School will not certify that the filtering service, will always be free of errors.
- St. Joseph School will not be responsible for any data that may be lost or for any interruption in computer services or any other inconveniences the user may experience.
- St. Joseph School will not be responsible for any willful damages incurred by a user, to technology oriented devices.

Responsibilities of User

Christian morality obliges each person to use all things in ways that are good and meaningful for human development. With right of access comes the responsibility to use the source both correctly and wisely. St. Joseph School students and staff and all those who use the school's technology-oriented devices are expected to exercise wise judgment, common sense, and good taste in selecting sites and material from the Internet. Staff will assist in monitoring Internet sites used but it is the responsibility of each user to monitor his/her use of technology resources, especially the Internet.

Internet

St. Joseph School will adhere to the policy as stated in the Diocese of Harrisburg Policy Handbook. It includes the following paragraph from Policy 6230:

> ***"The Internet is a public forum with unrestricted access. For this reason, the schools in the diocese restrict permission for the posting of information related to the school, the staff, and students on the Internet. No person is permitted to use the school name or images of the school, the school logo or seal, school staff or students in any form on the Internet or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the school administration. The posting of any such information on any website, social networking site, bulletin board, chat-room, e-mail, or other messaging system without permission, or posting or transmission of images or information in any format related to the school, staff or students that are defamatory, scurrilous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or impugning the character of another person is prohibited and will make any person involved in the posting or transmission of such subject to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the administration of the school, or by the diocese."***

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY ***continued***

General Guidelines for use of the Internet

- Computers are to be used only for the purpose of academic or other authorized activities.
- The Principal/Network Administrator/Computer Teacher/Technology Coordinator has the right to monitor and to judge the acceptability of all activities. Students may not attempt to deprive authorized personnel of any necessary supervision or access.
- Any attempt to go around system security, (hacking or any unauthorized activity) guessing passwords or in any way gaining access to secured resources is forbidden.
- Uses of proxy sites or other means to circumvent filtering software is strictly prohibited.
- No user may deliberately attempt to degrade the performance of any computer system. Users will not move, repair, reconfigure, modify, or attach external devices to the systems.
- Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- E-mail may be used in correspondence with professionals or regarding subject matter relevant to research. Student email is only used with permission. No personal email is permitted using a school email account.
- No student is allowed to enter a chat room. Staff and other adult users are likewise asked to avoid chat rooms when using the school's computer.
- Use of email and other Internet facilities to harass, offend or annoy other users is strictly forbidden.
- Transferring copyrighted material to or from St. Joseph School without express permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law. The student is deemed responsible to see that this does not occur.
- Deliberate spreading of a virus through the use of the Internet or a disk is strictly forbidden.
- Additional rules and restrictions may be added at any time.

Computer Use Rules

1. **Protect privacy**. For reasons of personal safety, students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. This may include address, telephone number, school address, etc. Students will not knowingly or carelessly post false information about a person(s) or organization(s).
2. **Research honestly**. Consider that all work on the Internet is copyrighted. Students will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own. The illegal downloading of copyrighted software for use on home and school computers is prohibited. All sources for research taken from the Internet for projects must be documented correctly.
3. **Respect life**. Fraudulent, harassing, violent, libelous, obscene, discriminatory, religiously offensive, ethically offensive, and other inappropriate materials or messages may not be e-mailed, printed, requested, displayed, uploaded, downloaded, or stored.
4. **Respect property**. Students will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt computer systems, or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal as well as immoral.

Consequences of Misuse

The use of the Internet, server, and computer equipment is a privilege, not a right. Attempts at inappropriate use will result in the **cancellation** of those privileges. If there are violations of this privilege, depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the server or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use of access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under appropriate school and diocesan policies, or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

- Students who do not use the Internet and other computer resources in an ethical manner will lose computer use privileges at school. The principal will determine if further disciplinary action is necessary.
- Disciplinary or legal action may be taken by the school or by other interested parties.

Loan of School-Owned Chromebooks or iPads

In an effort to ensure that all students are able to access educational materials while in school and at home, St. Joseph School will loan Chromebooks or iPads to students.

Device Usage

1. All usage of the device must be school related. Students must continue to abide by the school's Acceptable Use Policy when using the device at home.
2. The device's Internet connection is filtered. However, no filter is perfect, and it is acknowledged that some objectionable material may still be accessible.
3. Altering the device's settings or configuration or content on the device (apps or eBooks) is strictly prohibited; doing so will result in loss of the privilege to sign out devices in the future. The iPad case should not be removed.
4. St. Joseph School does not actively track student activities on the devices. Security software utilizing the microphone, webcam, or a keystroke logger is not used. Web browsing history and system logs may be consulted if necessary.

Financial Responsibility

The student's family will become financially responsible for the device in certain situations.

Areas of financial responsibility covered by **the student's family**:

1. Preventable damage from liquid, excessive heat, or other foreseeable environmental threats.
2. Preventable damage from carelessness - i.e. closing the LCD display of a laptop on a pen or pencil.
3. Theft or loss resulting from inadequate security precautions - i.e. leaving the device in plain sight inside a parked car.

Areas of financial responsibility covered by **the school**:

1. Hardware problems that may occur during normal.
2. Theft of the device when adequate security measures have been taken - an official police report must be supplied.

The school office should be notified immediately in the event of any damage or theft.

Cyber Bullying Clause

Purpose

St. Joseph School strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the school. Therefore, it shall be the policy of St. Joseph School to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyberbullying in any form are not tolerated.

Authority

All forms of bullying and cyberbullying by St. Joseph School students are prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying or cyberbullying in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline.

- Students who have been bullied or cyberbullied shall promptly report such incidents to the designated employees.
- Complaints of bullying or cyberbullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified. Neither reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of the submission of a complaint.
- St. Joseph School shall annually inform students that bullying or cyber bullying of students will not be tolerated.

Definition of Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of St. Joseph School by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs). All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of St. Joseph School, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline. This includes home devices as well as school equipment.

Delegation of Responsibility

- Each staff member shall be responsible for maintaining an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Students shall be encouraged to report bullying or cyberbullying complaints to St. Joseph School employees.
- All employees who receive a bullying or cyber bullying complaint shall investigate to determine if bullying or cyberbullying has occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, written documentation must be submitted to the principal.
- The principal will inform the parents of the victim and person accused.

Complaint Procedure Guidelines

1. A student or parent shall report a complaint of bullying or cyberbullying, orally or in writing, to a St. Joseph School employee.
2. The St. Joseph School employee will bring the report to the principal.
3. The St. Joseph School employee and the principal will investigate the alleged conduct that occurred.
4. The St. Joseph School employee and principal may ask assistance from other St. Joseph School employees in the investigation process.
5. After the investigation, the principal shall take corrective action to ensure that the conduct ceases.

Computer and Network use is also subject to Pennsylvania and Federal laws and regulations.
Suspected violations of applicable law are subject to investigation by school and law enforcement officials.

Among applicable laws are:

- Federal Copyright and Wire Fraud Laws
- Federal Computer Fraud and Abuse Law
- Federal and Pennsylvania Child Pornography Laws
- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act
- Pennsylvania Computer Crime Law
- Pyramid Schemes/Chain Letters
- Defamation and Common Law Actions for Invasion of Privacy

Legal Issues

Laws governing computer use currently exist in Pennsylvania. Violations of the above policies may constitute a criminal offense punishable under Pennsylvania or United States Federal law.

As an example, under Pennsylvania law:

"…it is a felony punishable by fine up to $15,000 and imprisonment up to seven years for any person to access, alter, or damage any computer system, network, software, database, or any part thereof, with the intent to interrupt the normal functioning of an organization (18 Pa. C.C. 3933)(a)(1)…"

"…Disclosing a password to a computer system, network, etc., knowingly and without authorization, is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to $10,000 and imprisonment of up to five years, as is intentional and unauthorized access to a computer, interference with the operation of a computer or network, or alteration of computer software (18 Pa. C.S. 3933)…"

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

As advancements in technology continue to shape the world around us, St. Joseph School is committed to teaching students how to use such tools in a safe, ethical, and faith-informed manner. At this time, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT, generative image creators, or AI-based writing platforms) by students is strictly prohibited.

Student Use of AI

- Students **may not use AI tools**—whether on school-issued devices, personal devices while on campus, or at home for school-related assignments.
- Teachers may educate students about the ethical implications and appropriate use of AI tools, and may demonstrate their use in controlled, instructional settings to promote awareness and responsible digital citizenship.
- Any student work submitted must be their own original creation. The use of AI-generated content without explicit permission will be considered academic dishonesty.

Consequences for Student Use of AI

Violations of this policy will result in the following consequences:

1. **First Offense**:
   The student will be required to redo the assignment with a teacher after school. Parents will be notified.
2. **Second Offense**:
   The student will receive a **zero** for the assignment. Additional disciplinary measures may be considered.
3. **Use of AI on School Devices**:
   Students who access or attempt to access AI tools on school-owned devices or while using the school network may face the **loss of technology privileges** for a period of time determined by the principal.

Teacher and Staff Use of AI

Teachers and staff may use AI tools:

- For instructional planning, assessment design, communication, and professional development.
- To model ethical and appropriate AI usage in age-appropriate ways to students.
- With transparency and discernment, ensuring that any use aligns with our school's Catholic identity, mission, and values.