

FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Fall River Public Schools Acceptable Use Policies

"Fall River Celebrates Technology"

FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY
417 ROCK STREET
FALL RIVER, MA 02721



FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**INTERNET/ NETWORK
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Dr. Nicholas A. Fischer, Superintendent

FALL RIVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Hon. Edward M. Lambert, Jr., Chairman

Brian Bigelow, Vice-Chairman

Kevin Aguiar

Shawn Cadime

Mark Costa

Timothy McCoy

Marilyn Roderick

December 2006



Fall River Public Schools

Acceptable Use Policies

"Fall River Celebrates Technology"

Executive Summary

In response to the growing use of the Internet in our classrooms, the Fall River Public Schools have implemented Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) to ensure that school computers are being used in a safe and appropriate manner. This policy includes **ALL** users, students, staff and the community.

At each school throughout the District, an Acceptable Use Policy acts as a written agreement between administrators, teachers, students and parents. It outlines the terms and conditions for Internet use by defining access privileges, rules of online behavior, and the consequences for violating those rules.

Users are responsible for good behavior on school computers just as students are responsible for good behavior in class or school hallways. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply.

The network is provided for staff and students and other users to conduct research or school business and communicate with others. Access to the network services is given to staff, students, and others who agree to act in a considerate, legal and responsible manner. Access is a privilege – not a right.

Although the district will make every effort to promote the proper and safe use of the Internet, individual users are responsible for their behavior and communications over the network. The district has installed a firewall (filter) on the network to restrict access to areas on the Internet that are illegal or inappropriate for students in the school setting. Although these precautions have been taken, accessing inappropriate material remains a possibility and parents and guardians, as well as staff members, are responsible for setting and conveying standards to our students.

It is presumed that all users will comply with the Fall River Public Schools Network Access Policy and will honor the following rules:

Responsible Users May:

- Do school business and send appropriate district reports to municipal, state, and federal agencies.
- Use the Internet to research educational topics and assigned classroom projects.
- Use the E-Mail to communicate and send messages related to District or school business
- Use the network to do other school business and/or classroom work.

Responsible User May NOT:

- Use the Internet for any illegal purposes.
- Engage in “cyber-bullying” or use impolite or abusive language.
- Violate the rules of common sense or etiquette.
- Change computer files that do not belong to the user.
- Send or receive copyrighted materials without permission.
- Share a restricted password with anyone.
- Change or tamper with network configurations.
- Place unapproved hardware or software on the network including LAN/WAN or wireless devices

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored.

During school, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Network administrators may review staff and student files and communication to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on district servers and computers will always be private.

Fall River Public Schools Internet and Network Acceptable Use Agreement

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The Fall River Public Schools provide employees and students with access to the Fall River Public Schools Data Network (hereinafter referred to as The Network), which also serves as our gateway to the Internet.

1.2 The Network has been developed for educational purposes. It is intended to assist in preparing students for a successful life in the 21st century. The Network provides access to a wide range of information resources and the ability to communicate with people throughout the world. The term “educational purposes” includes use of The Network for curriculum activities, and professional or career development activities related to education.

1.3 Additionally, The Network will be used to enhance productivity through increased communication within the District and assist its employees in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers. The Network will also assist the District in communicating with parents, social service agencies, government agencies, and businesses.

1.4 The Network may not be used for personal commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering, providing, or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.

2.0 District Responsibilities

2.1 The Network Manager will oversee access to The Network and will establish processes for establishing the following: individual and class accounts; authorization for installation of all software and hardware; quotas for disk usage on the system; retention and archival schedules; District virus protection process; review of filtering issues, and other necessary activities.

2.2 The principal/supervisor or designee will serve as the site based coordinator for The Network. The site based coordinator in partnership with the Network Manager and the Director of Technology Integration and Management will approve building-level activities. Together they will ensure employees receive proper training in the use of the network and the requirements of this policy. In addition they will establish a system to ensure that students using The Network receive adequate supervision and network orientation. The building principal/supervisor will post the network policy in appropriate locations, and be responsible for interpreting and enforcing the District Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement at the school/building level.

2.3 When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will select material appropriate to the students and relevant to their course objectives. In order to determine the appropriateness of the material contained on, or accessed through websites, teachers will preview required materials prior to student use. Teachers will provide guidelines and resource lists to assist their students in developing the necessary skills to ascertain the reliability of information. Teachers will also assist their students with skills such as distinguishing fact from opinion, and engaging in discussions about controversial issues, and demonstrating tolerance and respect for those who may hold divergent views.

2.4 The Fall River Public Schools will maintain a web presence and will continue to develop dynamic web pages that will present information about the District and our community.

2.5 With the approval of the Chief Information Officer, the Principal and the Director of Technology Integration and Management, schools and classes may establish web pages on the District web site that present information about the school and/or individual class activities.

2.6 The Fall River Public Schools will continue to use its firewall (filters) and/or contracted sources to block access to inappropriate sites in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

3.0 Access to the System

3.1 The Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement will govern all utilization of The Network. Student use of the system will also be governed by applicable sections of the Administrators Handbook, Staff Notices, and relevant student handbooks.

3.2 All District employees and students will have access to the World Wide Web through the District's networked computers. Parents/Guardians may specifically request that their children not be provided such access by indicating so on a letter to the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. Upon receipt of such letter, the Fall River Public Schools will make its best effort to restrict all Internet access. However, there can be no guarantee that such a student can be restricted at all times.

3.3 E-mail access will be provided to all staff as necessary.

3.4 A guest, such as a visiting teacher or consultant, may receive an individual account at the discretion of the Chief Information Officer if there is a specific, District-related purpose requiring such access. Use of the system by a guest must be specifically limited to this district-related purpose.

4.0 Parent/Guardian Notification and Responsibility

4.1 The District will publish and make available to all parents/guardians The Network policies governing its use on its website www.falliverschools.org In addition, principals and teachers **WILL** require staff, students, parents and guardians to sign Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreements before allowing network access.

4.2 The Fall River Public Schools Acceptable Use Agreement contains restrictions on the access of inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be in concert with the particular values of the families of students. It is not practically possible for the Fall River Public Schools to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, the District recognizes that parents/guardians bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to their children. The district will encourage parents/guardians to specify to their children what material is and is not acceptable for their children to access through The Network.

4.3 Fall River Public Schools will provide students and parents with guidelines for the student's personal safety while using the Internet. The Fall River Public Schools will utilize the resources of NetSmartz (<http://www.netsmartz.org/>) and I-Safe (<http://www.isafe.org/>) as vital components of the technology curriculum at all grade levels.

5.0 District Limitation of Liability

5.1 The Fall River Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through its data network will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damages users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service, or personal physical, psychological, or monetary damages. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations arising through the use of the system.

6.0 Due Process

6.1 Fall River Public Schools will cooperate fully with local, county, state, and federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through The Network.

6.2 Violations of the Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement will carry serious consequences and will result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Fall River Public Schools and/or City, County, State or Federal authorities. Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation. These disciplinary actions may include termination, suspension, or expulsion.

6.3 The Chief Information Officer, the Network Manager or the Director of Technology Integration Management, may terminate the account privileges of a user by providing notice to the user. Guest accounts not active for more than 30 days may be removed, along with the user's files, without notice to the user.

7.0 Search and Seizure

7.1 The Network is the property of the school department and its storage systems are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on The Network.

7.2 Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that the user has violated or is violating the District Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement, the law or the disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

7.3 An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a user has violated the District Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement, or the law. The nature of the investigation will be in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

8.0 Internet Acceptable Use Agreement

8.1 Existing copyright law will govern the use of material accessed through The Network. Because the extent of copyright protection of certain works found on the Internet is unclear, users will make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work and respect copyright law.

8.2, All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their use for The Network.

8.3 Access to the Internet provided by The Network is provided for classroom activities, professional and career development in line with the educational goals of the district.

8.4 The Internet connection is not to be used for any non-educational purposes including, but not limited to, commercial solicitations.

8.5 The user of The Network Internet connection becomes an extension of the Fall River Public Schools and is expected to abide by the rules of conduct set forth by the District. Students should reference the Student Handbook where applicable. Inappropriate behavior will not be allowed.

8.6 The user will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language or images.

8.7 The user will not engage in any form of “cyber-bullying”. This includes, but is not limited to, email, text messages, cell phone calls, or website postings.

8.8 The user will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminating attacks.

8.9 The user will not post information that could cause damage or disruption to the Network.

8.10 The user will not install unauthorized hardware, software, wireless routers, or download unauthorized software from any remote location.

8.11 Users will not attempt to go beyond their authorized access, make deliberate attempts to disrupt system performance, destroy data (by spreading computer viruses or by any other means), or engage in other illegal activities.

8.12 The user will not disseminate passwords, codes, access telephone numbers, or account numbers to unauthorized persons.

8.13 The user will not use The Network to access material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (e.g., hate literature).

Sample Acceptable Use Policy Letter to Parents

[This is a sample letter that will be placed on official Fall River Public Schools Letterhead]

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Internet is a global network that will provide your child with access to a wide range of information. Your child will also be able to communicate with people from throughout the world. Use of the Internet for educational projects will assist in preparing your child for success in life and future careers.

It is possible that your child may find material on the Internet that you would consider objectionable. District Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy restricts access to material that is inappropriate in the school environment. Although our staff will supervise student use of the Internet, we cannot guarantee that your child will not gain access to inappropriate material. There may be specific material on the Internet that is not in agreement with your family's values. We would like to encourage you to use this as an opportunity to have a discussion about how these values should guide your child's activities while on the Internet.

The smooth operation of our network relies upon the proper conduct of our users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to accept. In general the guidelines describe educational, ethical, legal and efficient use of network resources.

You have the option of requesting that your child not be provided with access to the Internet. To exercise this option, please send a written request to the principal of your child's school.

In the event that your child is provided with the opportunity for an individual e-mail account, you must specifically authorize it. You and your child will then sign a Student E-Mail Agreement to establish such an account.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nicholas A. Fischer
Superintendent of Schools

Terms and Conditions for Network Access

Levels of Student Access

The following levels of access will be provided through the District System. As noted, parents may request that their child not have any access to the Internet by writing to their child's principal.

World Wide Web - All students will have access to the Web through the District's networked computers.

Responsibility

To use the Internet through the Fall River Public Schools, the user agrees to take full responsibility for his or her own actions. The Fall River Public Schools will not be held liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the Internet through this link. Therefore, all users shall assume full liability, legal financial, or otherwise, for their actions.

Due to the manner in which information can readily be placed on the Internet, the School System will not be held responsible for the accuracy or the quality of the information obtained by the user through the Internet. District and building facilitators will make reasonable efforts to maintain reliable service and user privacy, but they cannot absolutely guarantee that the system will always be available and/or reliable, that files will always be saved and that privacy will be completely guaranteed.

Acceptable Use

Student access to the Internet provided by The Fall River Public Schools Data Network is provided for classroom activities, professional or career development in line with the educational goals of the district. We expect students to behave in the on-line world in the same as they would in an ordinary classroom.

Unacceptable Use

The Internet connection is not to be used for any non-educational purposes including commercial solicitations.

The user of the Fall River Public Schools Data/Internet Network connection becomes an extension of the Fall River Public Schools and is expected to abide by the rules set forth in the Fall River Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy and student handbooks where applicable. Inappropriate behavior will not be allowed.

The user will not:

- use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language or images
- post information that could cause damage or disruption
- engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks
- engage in cyber-bullying of any type or form (text messaging, email or cell phone)
- knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization
- place any unauthorized hardware, software, or wireless devices on The Network

Safety

The safety of the Internet user is of utmost concern. In order to assure personal safety, the user must never reveal detailed personal information such as home addresses or telephone numbers. Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met on-line without parent/guardian approval and participation. Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

The safety of the system is also a concern of the Fall River Public Schools. User will not attempt to go beyond their authorized access, install software, download unauthorized software, make deliberate attempts to disrupt system performance or destroy data (via computer viruses or any other means), or engage in other illegal activities.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

The user will not plagiarize (copy) works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.

Inappropriate Access to Material

The user will not use the Fall River Public Schools Data Network to access material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination toward other people (e.g., hate literature). Should a user encounter an inappropriate site, the user will immediately close the connection and refrain from downloading any materials. The user will report the access of the site to the person in charge of the Internet connection site where the access occurred.

The Fall River Public Schools reserves the right to periodically review the Web Sites accessed by individual users. These reviews will help to ensure the educational purposes for which the Internet connection is provided.

Parents/Guardians should instruct student users if there is additional material that they think it would be inappropriate for a student user to access. The district fully expects student users to follow parent's instructions in this matter.

Violations

Violations of the Internet/Network Acceptable Use Agreement can carry serious consequences and could result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Fall River Public Schools and/or City, County, State, or Federal authorities. Any question or allegations concerning adherence to the Acceptable Use Policy may be brought to the attention of the Network Manager, the Director of Technology Integration and Management or the site principal/supervisor.

Acceptable Use Letters of Agreement