

DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Darien, Connecticut

SERIES 4000: PERSONNEL
POLICY 4300

EMPLOYEE USE OF THE DISTRICT'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS
AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and e-mail are effective and important technological resources. The Board provides computers, a computer network, including Internet access and an e-mail system, and other electronic devices that access the network such as wireless and/or portable electronic hand-held equipment that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture and recording, sound recording, information transmitting and/or receiving, storing, etc. (including, but not limited to, personal laptops, Smartphones, network access devices, Kindles, Nooks, cellular telephones, radios, walkmen, CD players, I-Pads or other tablet computers, walkie-talkies, Blackberries, personal data assistants, I-Phones, Androids and other electronic signaling devices), (referred to collectively as "the computer systems"), in order to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the district.

These computer systems are business and educational tools. As such, they are made available to Board employees for business and education related uses. The Administration shall develop regulations setting forth procedures to be used by the Administration in an effort to ensure that such computer systems are used for appropriate business and education related purposes.

The system administrator and others managing the computer systems may access email or monitor activity on the computer system or electronic devices accessing the computer systems at any time and for any reason or no reason. Typical examples include when there is reason to suspect inappropriate conduct or there is a problem with the computer systems needing correction. Further, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems can access or monitor activity on the systems despite the use of passwords by individual users, and can bypass such passwords. In addition, review of emails, messages or information stored on the computer systems, which can be forensically retrieved, includes those messages and/or electronic data sent, posted and/or retrieved using social networking sites, including, but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Incidental personal use of the computer systems may be permitted solely for the purpose of e-mail transmissions and access to the Internet on a limited, occasional basis. Such incidental personal use of the computer systems, however, is subject to all rules,

including monitoring of all such use, as the Superintendent may establish through regulation. Moreover, any such incidental personal use shall not interfere in any manner with work responsibilities.

Users should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of the computer system or other electronic devices that access the computer system. Use of the computer system represents an employee's acknowledgement that the employee has read and understands this policy and any applicable regulations in their entirety, including the provisions regarding monitoring and review of computer activity.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

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DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Darien, Connecticut

SERIES 4000: PERSONNEL
POLICY R-4300

EMPLOYEE USE OF THE DISTRICT'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS
AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
(Administrative Regulations)

Introduction

The Darien Board of Education provides staff access to a multitude of technology resources for business and educational purposes. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community beyond our campus. The advantages of having access to these resources are far greater than any potential downside. However, with the privilege of access is the responsibility of students, teachers, staff and the public to exercise appropriate personal and professional responsibility in their use of these resources. These Administrative Regulations are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of networked information and communication tools to support 21st century learning in our schools.

The Board and Administration value freedom of expression and an open exchange of ideas and information. The Board provides employees with access to a wide range of information and electronic services, including the use of computers, computer networks (i.e. the Internet), access to a public wifi network, and electronic communication (i.e. electronic mail, telephone, voice mail and faxes). These computer systems are business and educational tools. As such, they are being made available to employees of the district for district-related educational and business purposes. *All users of the computer systems must restrict themselves to appropriate district-related educational and business purposes.* Incidental personal use of the computer systems may be permitted solely for the purpose of e-mail transmissions and similar communications, including access to the Internet on a limited, occasional basis. Such incidental personal use of the computer systems is subject to all rules, including monitoring of all such use, set out in these regulations. Moreover, any such incidental personal use shall not interfere in any manner with work responsibilities.

These computer systems are expensive to purchase, install and maintain. As the property of the district these computer systems must be carefully handled and their integrity preserved for the benefit of all. Therefore, access to the computer systems is a privilege, and not a right. Students will be required to adhere to a set of policies and procedures, as set forth in detail below. Violations may lead to withdrawal of the access privilege and/or disciplinary measures in accordance with the Board's student discipline policy.

Definitions

Child pornography –means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, cartoon, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where -

- (a) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (b) such visual depiction is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (c) such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

“Darien Electronic environment” is defined as all materials used within the Darien network including such items as computers, computer hardware, software, and the campus-wide computer network, communication devices and lines, the School District voice-mail system, fax machines, etc.

“Darien Network” is defined as any electronic device or service managed by the Darien Public School District

“Devices” refer to district owned/leased electronic equipment, including computers, mobile web enabled devices, iPads, MP3 players, portable memory storage devices, calculators with interfacing capability, cellphones or ECDs (electronic communication devices), digital cameras and any other electronic equipment provided to students for educational purposes.

“Educational use” is defined as a use that supports communication, research, and learning within the school environment.

“Harmful to minors” – any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- (a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- (b) depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- (c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

“Information technology” is defined as Internet access, blogging, podcasting, email, published and non-published documents, and various forms of multimedia technology.

Obscene – means any material or performance if, a) taken as a whole, it predominantly appeals to the prurient interest, b) it depicts or describes in a patently offensive way a

prohibited sex act and c) taken as a whole, does not have serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. For the purposes of this section, "prohibited sex act" means erotic fondling, nude performance, sexual excitement, sado-masochistic abuse, masturbation or sexual intercourse.

"Technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure" is defined as the Darien Public Schools network, the Internet, Google Apps for Education, email, hardware, software, printers, peripheral devices, individual computer devices, and web enabled devices.

Purpose

The District acknowledges that there is a delicate balance between freedom of expression and respect for the rights of fellow members of the school community. The District provides access to a wide range of information technology to support learning and communicating with others. Information technology will be used to increase communication, enhance student engagement, and assist staff and students in acquiring new skills. The technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure will also be utilized to provide relevant school information to a global community.

These Administrative Regulations require all users to maintain reasonable standards of professional and personal respect and courtesy. Employees are provided with broad access to the Darien electronic environment. Despite the unique attributes of the electronic environment, all federal and state laws, and Board of Education policies and regulations -- including the terms of all handbooks and catalogues distributed all employees -- apply in full force to use of the electronic environment. These policies and regulations include, but are not limited to, all Board of Education harassment and discrimination policies. Further, applicable laws include, but are not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

The purpose of these Administrative Regulations is to address those aspects of the electronic environment that are specific to computer use, electronic communication, and computer networks. These Administrative Regulations apply equally to users who access the system. The purpose of these regulations is to assure that the electronic resources are used in a manner that:

1. is consistent with their educational purposes,
2. will assure the safety and privacy of students and staff,
3. will protect users from exposure to inappropriate and offensive material, and
4. will assure that the privilege of electronic resource access is not abused.

User Access

Access to information technology through the Darien electronic environment is a privilege, not a right. Employees shall be required to read the Board's Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems and Electronic Communication Policy, as well as these associated Administrative Regulations, and submit online their acceptance of the User Agreement annually.

Eligibility to use Computer Facilities

Individual User Accounts will be issued to all employees. All accounts are issued upon acceptance of the user agreement contract (see appendix A). All staff accounts are valid for the duration of employment.

Privacy

Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for business and education purposes. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials or when using the District network. The District reserves the right to disclose any electronic messages to law enforcement officials or third parties as may be required by law. The district intends to monitor and review in a limited fashion, but will do so as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes.

As part of the monitoring and reviewing process, the District will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of an employee or other user. *The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for e-mail, can be bypassed for these purposes.* The District's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitoring and reviewing process also includes, but is not limited to; oversight of Internet site access, the right to review emails sent and received, the right to track access to blogs, electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms, and the right to review document downloading and printing.

Unacceptable Use

Employees are responsible for their use of the Darien electronic environment, including computer hardware, accounts and user-ids. Users must take all reasonable precautions, including password maintenance and file protection measures, to prevent use of accounts by unauthorized persons or use of accounts in an unauthorized manner. The primary purpose of the Darien electronic environment is to provide authorized users with resources that facilitate the business and educational purpose of the District. The following uses of the Darien electronic environment are expressly prohibited:

1. Sending any form of solicitation not directly related to the business of the Board of Education.
2. Transmitting any material that includes confidential student information in violation of the Board of Education's Confidentiality and Access to Student Records Policy.
3. Improper Access: Gaining, or attempting to gain, improper access to the Darien electronic environment, or the files or accounts of another user, including but not limited to improperly modifying or deleting the files/data of another user.
4. Destructive Behavior: Any action that might be harmful to or interfere with the Darien electronic environment, the network, or the data stored on or transported by them or other devices connected to them.

5. Offensive Behaviors/Harassment: Sending any form of slanderous, harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, including messages with obscene language, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime).
6. Theft of devices, computer systems, or computer networks.
7. Accessing dangerous information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or danger to others.
8. Giving your username or password to any other student, or using the username or password of someone else to access any part of the system.
9. Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, contains child pornography, or is harmful to minors, as defined above.
10. Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to computer and/or telecommunications networks and resources.
11. Posting or sending of private or personal information about another person without their consent.
12. Using social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc.) in a manner that disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district; is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications; creates a hostile work environment; breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.
13. Violating any federal or state law, or Darien Board of Education policy or regulation.
14. Violating copyright laws.

Termination of Access and Accounts

All Darien accounts will expire and access will end with the termination of a user's relationship with the School District.

Network

The District network includes wired and wireless computers, servers housed on site and in the cloud, and peripheral equipment, files and storage, e-mail and Internet content (blogs, web sites, web mail, groups, wikis, etc.). The District reserves the right to prioritize the use of, and access to, the network. All use of the network must support student instruction, research and professional learning consistent with the mission of the District. The District provides access to its computer networks and the Internet for educational purposes only.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Connection of any personal electronic device to any network on school grounds is subject to all regulations and guidelines in this document. Employees are permitted to connect to the district network via the secure wireless connection provided by the school system, but all access must be in accordance with these Administrative Regulations.

Each user is responsible for his/her personal device and should use it responsibly and appropriately. Darien Public Schools takes no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged devices, including lost or corrupted data on those devices. It is the responsibility of each individual to secure their device when not in use.

Content Filtering

Filtering software is used to block or filter access to visual depictions that are obscene and all child pornography and other objectionable material, which includes pornography, obscene material, and other material that may be harmful to minors, in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The District may also block or filter other content lacking educational or work-related value or benefit or that poses a threat to the network, and will take measures to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students. Users shall not use any website, application, or methods to bypass filtering of the network or perform any other unlawful activities. In addition to the District's use of filtering software, every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the network and Internet and avoid these sites. Employees should report accidental or inappropriate computer or Internet access to an administrator for blocking. Employees are strongly encouraged to immediately report *any* harassing, threatening, intimidating or other improper message received through the Darien electronic environment. Internet usage is logged and monitored for use consistent with Board policy.

Enforcement and Discipline

The use of Darien's electronic environment is a privilege. Any employee who violates the Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems and Electronic Communication Policy, or these associated Administrative Regulations, may have his or her access privileges terminated. Additionally, such misconduct may subject the violator to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, and may result in criminal prosecution. Because no two situations are identical, the Board reserves the right to determine the appropriate discipline for any particular set of circumstances. Any use of the Darien electronic environment that violates applicable copyright laws is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as those civil remedies and criminal penalties provided by federal law.

Acknowledgment

By use of the Darien electronic environment, employees acknowledge that there is no guarantee that the Darien electronic environment is virus-free, or that all hardware and/or software used to access the electronic environment will be compatible with the Darien electronic environment. Employees acknowledge that the District is not responsible for any damages a user suffers, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries or service interruptions of any kind. Employees acknowledge that use and/or access to Darien's electronic environment does not entitle the user to seek indirect, consequential, special, punitive, peremptory, or like damages from the District in connection with such use and access.

Revisions

These Administrative Regulations are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to users via Aspen's Information Portal. All users are responsible for keeping abreast of any updates to these Administrative Regulations.

Appendix A: Electronic Signature Form

REVIEWED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION: February 24, 2015, (Effective July 1, 2015)