

Bethlehem Central School District Computer & Internet Acceptable Use

The Bethlehem Central School District is pleased to offer its students access to the Internet. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources is to be structured to point students to sources that have been evaluated prior to use. Although students may be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to learning objectives.

While the intent of the School Steering Committee for Technology is to make Internet access available in order to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet, which could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's parent or guardian would be liable.

Parents and guardians of minors bear responsibility for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources in and out of school. Students using school-provided Internet access must demonstrate responsible behavior online just as they do in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

Even should the school institute technical methods or systems to regulate students' Internet access, those methods do not guarantee student compliance with this acceptable use policy. That notwithstanding, the School Steering Committee for Technology believes that the benefits of access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. Toward that end, the Bethlehem Central Technology Committee provides this policy for review by all parents, guardians and other members of the community and provides parents and guardians the option of requesting for their minor children alternative activities not requiring Internet use.

The purpose of school-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students must act in a manner consistent with the educational objectives of teachers.

School access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and it entails responsibility. Users are responsible for keeping their user names and passwords confidential. Users should never give computer passwords to others and should never log on to a district computer and then leave that computer unattended without logging off the computer first.

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers are private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages at any time to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- Accessing, uploading, downloading or distributing vulgar, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, ethnically offensive or any other inappropriate material.
- Transmitting obscene, abusive, harassing, sexually explicit or threatening language.
- Violating any local, state or federal statute.
- Vandalizing, damaging or disabling the property of another individual or organization.
- Accessing stored computer folders or files that belong to other network users or organizations.
- Violating copyright or otherwise using the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.
- Using the Internet for any illegal or commercial (profit-making) purpose.
- Downloading computer applications or installing software applications or computer hardware without first having the express permission from the BCSD Technology Office through a BCSD faculty member. This includes, but is not limited to, audio files, movies, animation files, games, instant messenger, computer applications, zip files or other large files.
- Storing any computer files not directly related to the educational goals of the user or the district on Bethlehem Central School District storage areas.

Violations will result in the following:

First offense:

- Written notice will be made, put in the student's discipline folder and sent home to parents.
- The student's Internet privileges will be suspended for one month.

Second offense:

- Written notice will be made, put in the student's discipline folder and sent home to parents.

- The student's Internet privileges will be suspended based on the severity of the offense, with a minimum suspension of the remainder of the school year. During the suspension period, computer use by the student may only take place with teacher authorization.

At any point, if the offense is severe enough, law enforcement officials may be involved.

Bethlehem Central School District makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The school is not responsible for:

- any damages users suffer, including—but not limited to—loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service;
- the accuracy, nature or quality of information stored on school diskettes, hard drives or servers or gathered through school-provided Internet access;
- personal property used to access school computers or networks or for school-provided Internet access; or
- unauthorized financial obligations resulting from school-provided access to the Internet.

This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state and federal statutes.