

Brick Township Board of Education District Policy

Instructional Personnel

Series 4000

**Acceptable Use of Computer Network(s) /
Computers & Resources by Teaching Staff Members**

Policy 4119.26

Date Adopted:	Date Revised:	Page 1 of 5
Date Reviewed: 1 st Reading July 31, 2014		

The Board of Education recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technologies shift the manner in which information is accessed, communicated and transferred that those changes will alter the nature of teaching and learning. Access to telecommunications will allow teaching staff members to explore databases, libraries, Internet sites, bulletin boards and the like while exchanging information with individuals throughout the world. The Board supports access by teaching staff members to information sources but reserves the right to limit in-school use to materials appropriate to educational purposes. Then Board directs the Superintendent of Schools to effect training of teaching staff members in skills appropriate to analyzing and evaluating such resources as to appropriateness for educational purposes.

The Board also recognizes that telecommunications will allow teaching staff member access to information sources that have not been pre-screened using Board-approved standards. The Board therefore adopts the following standards of conduct for the use of computer network(s) and declares unethical, unacceptable, inappropriate or illegal behavior as just cause for taking disciplinary action, limiting or revoking network access privileges, instituting legal action or taking other appropriate action as deemed necessary.

The Board provides access to District approved web based resources, network(s) and computers for educational purposes only. Staff shall utilize only the District approved web based resources for educational uses unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Superintendent of Schools. The Board retains the right to restrict or terminate teaching staff members' access to the computer network(s)/ computers at any time, for any reason. The Board retains the right to have the Superintendent of Schools monitor network activity in any form necessary to maintain the integrity of the network(s) and ensure its proper use. Staff shall have no expectation of privacy when using district technology, the district network, and/or public unprofessional behavior.

Standards for Computer Network(s)

Any individual engaging in the following actions declared unethical, unacceptable or illegal when using computer network(s)/computers shall be subject to discipline or legal action:

- A. Using the computer network(s)/computers for illegal, inappropriate or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities. Illegal activities are defined as activities that violate federal, state or local laws and regulations. Inappropriate activities are defined as those that violate the intended use of the network(s). Obscene activities shall be defined as violation of generally accepted social standards for use of publicly owned and operated communication vehicles.

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- B. Using the computer network(s)/computers to violate copyrights, institutional or third-party copyrights, license agreements or other contracts.
- C. Using the computer network(s) in a manner that:
- a. Intentionally disrupts network traffic or crashes the network(s);
 - b. Degrades or disrupts equipment performance;
 - c. Uses the computing resources of the school district for commercial purposes, financial gain or fraud;
 - d. Steals data of other intellectual property;
 - e. Gains or seeks unauthorized access to the files of others or vandalizes the data of another user;
 - f. Gains or seeks unauthorized access to resources or entities;
 - g. Forges electronic mail messages or uses an account owned by others/
 - h. Invades the privacy of others;
 - i. Posts anonymous messages;
 - j. Possesses any data that is a violation of this policy; and/or,
 - k. Engages in other activities that do not advance the educational purposes for which computer network(s)/computers are provided.

District computers, computer networks, email resources, etc. are to be used for educational purposes only. Specifically prohibited are online shopping, blogging, fantasy sports, social networks and other non-educational uses.

Online Education

An online classroom is still a classroom. Though courses and/or assigned programs of home instruction may be online, appropriate classroom behavior is still mandatory. Respect for the participants is essential for learning and student achievement.

E-mail

School District personnel shall adhere to the following guidelines when sending or receiving messages via electronic mail with District students:

- A. All e-mails between school district personnel and a student must be sent or received through the school district's e-mail system except as otherwise authorized by the Superintendent of Schools as set forth in Paragraph F below.
- B. School District personnel shall not provide their personal e-mail address to any student. If a student sends an e-mail to a staff member's personal e-mail address, the staff member shall respond to the e-mail through the school district e-mail system and inform the student his/her

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personal e-mail address shall not be used for any electronic communication between the staff member and the student.

- C. School District personnel's school district e-mail account is subject to review by authorized school district officials. Therefore, staff members shall have no expectation of privacy on the school district's e-mail system.
- D. School District Personnel shall not reveal passwords to others. If a staff member believes that a password has been lost or stolen, or that someone without authorization has accessed email, he/she should contact the Help Desk immediately. Email windows should not be left open on the screen when the computer is unattended.
- E. To ensure that federal copyright laws are not violated, staff shall not send messages that contain text without the author's permission.
- F. School District personnel may communicate via electronic mail with a student who is a family member or relative provided that a notification form establishing the family relationship and authorizing such communication has been completed by the student's parent/guardian, and is on file with and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.
- G. Staff shall not send messages that contain material that may be defined by a reasonable person as obscene; messages that are racist, sexist or promote illegal or unethical activity; or messages:
 - a) That violate the district's affirmative action policy
 - b) That are personal in nature and not related to the business of the district;
 - c) That are broadcast to a large group of other personnel without supervisory permission;
 - d) That contains confidential information to persons not authorized to receive that information.
- H. Personnel shall become familiar with the district's policies and regulation on staff and student access to networked information resources before initiating email use.
- I. Employees learning of any misuse of the email systems shall notify the Superintendent of Schools.
- J. Employees learning of any misuse of electronic communication systems shall notify principal or chief school administrator immediately.

Social Networking Websites

The Superintendent of Schools will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- A. Improper fraternization with students using social networking websites on the internet;

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- B. Teachers are not to engage in "friending" or otherwise communicating with current District students on social networking sites such as Facebook and other social networking sites, except as otherwise authorized by the Superintendent of Schools as set forth in Paragraph C below.
- C. A teacher may communicate with a student who is a family member or relative provided that a notification form establishing the family relationship and authorizing such communication has been completed by the student's parent/guardian, and is on file with and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.
- D. All e-contacts with students should be through the District's computer network and telephone system; Students shall not be directed to personal websites or messaging systems other than those authorized by the District.
- E. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited;
- F. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content;
- G. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol;
- H. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid;
- I. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of District computers and technology;
- J. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent of Schools will periodically conduct Internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the Superintendent of Schools will download the offensive material and promptly bring that misconduct to the attention of the board's personnel committee for review.

Cell Phones

School staff shall not contact students' cell phones unless an authorization form to do so has been completed by the student's parent/guardian, and is on file with and approved by the Superintendent of Schools. School District personnel shall limit cell phone interaction with students to contact that pertains to legitimate school business. Legitimate school business includes:

- A. Answering academic inquiries regarding homework, other classroom work or assignments;
- B. Scheduling appointments for school related conferences and/or extra help;
- C. Clarifying classroom expectations and/or assignments;
- D. Notifications related to classroom, club or sports schedules, events, trips, assignments, and deadlines.

Cell phone contact with students shall be as brief and direct as possible. When brief contact is not sufficient or feasible to resolve the matter, teachers, where appropriate, shall schedule face-to-face conferences during regular classroom and extra-help periods to confer with the student.

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Text Messages

Text messaging communications between a teaching staff member and an individual student are prohibited unless an authorization form approving such communication has been completed by the student's parent/guardian, and is on file with and approved by the Superintendent of Schools. The need to text message must be directly related to the teaching staff member's professional responsibilities with a class or co-curricular activity. Any such text message must be sent to every member of the class or co-curricular activity. Any such approval for text messaging shall not extend beyond the class or co-curricular activity approved by the Superintendent of Schools

Violations

Individuals violating this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions as defined by Board Policy and the district disciplinary code(s) that includes but is not limited to:

1. Use of network(s)/computers only under direct supervision;
2. Suspension of network privileges;
3. Revocation of network privileges;
4. Suspension of computer privileges;
5. Revocation of computer privileges;
6. Suspension;
7. Dismissal;
8. Legal action and prosecution by the authorities; and/or,
9. Any appropriate action that may be deemed necessary by the Superintendent of Schools and approved by the Board of Education.

Implementation

This policy shall be distributed annually to all staff members.

NJSA 2A:38A-1 et seq Computer system
2C:20-25 Computer-related theft
18A:7A-11 Reports by school districts
18A:6-10 Dismissal and reduction in compensation of persons under tenure
18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
18A 27-4 Power of boards of education to make rules governing employment 18A:36-
35 School Internet web sites; disclosure of certain student information prohibited

Hicks v. Brick Bd of Ed 1975 SLD 332
Quiroli v. Linwood Bd of Ed 1974 SLD 1035
Carlstadt Teachers Ass'n v. Carlstadt Bd of Ed App. Div. unreported decision (Docket no. A-1469-80-T4, decided March 26, 1982) 1982 SLD 1448
N.J. v. T.L.O. 469 U.S. 325 (1985)
O'Connor v. Ortega 480 U.S. 709 (1987)

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110
Manual for the Evaluation of Local School Districts
New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC)
