

# Panola Schools District

## Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

### Introduction

Panola Schools recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21<sup>st</sup>-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, we provide access to technologies for student and staff use.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on the school campus.

- The Panola Schools network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies will be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Panola Schools makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

### Technologies Covered

Panola Schools may provide Internet access, laptops, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more.

As new technologies emerge, Panola Schools will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover *all* available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

**Usage Policies**

All technologies provided by the district are intended for education purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics of this document as well as the spirit of it: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

**Privacy Policy**

The System Administrator has the authority to monitor all Accounts, including e-mail and other materials transmitted or received via the Accounts. All such materials are the property of the District. Account users do not have any right to or expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

**Web Access**

Panola Schools provides its users with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely.

Users are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should follow district protocol to alert an IT staff member or submit the site for review.

**Email**

Panola Schools may provide users with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies.

If users are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher.

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

**Social / Collaborative Content**

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, Panola Schools may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users.

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

### **Personally-Owned Devices Policy**

Students are allowed to use their mobile devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, and cell phones) and will have access to the District's wireless network for these purposes. Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they should not be used over the school network without express permission from IT staff. In some cases a program may have to be installed to allow a personally owned device to function on campus and the technology staff will inform the student of such an occurrence. **Panola Schools will not provide resources or staff to repair or maintain student owned devices.** These devices should be current on all software updates and protected from viruses and spyware. All policies relating to CIPA and its requirements will apply to student owned devices on the district wireless network. Panola Schools will retain the right to permanently remove a student owned device from the district network should it become necessary due to abuse or misuse of the network. Students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, and cell phones) turned off and put away—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes.

### **Security**

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin.

If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

### **Downloads**

**Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff.**

You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for education purposes.

**Netiquette**

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Users should also recognize that among the valuable content online is unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet.

Users should also remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

**Plagiarism**

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

**Personal Safety**

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

**Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

### **Examples of Acceptable Use**

I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Use**

I will **not**:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school's safety measures and filtering tools.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn't intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

**Limitation of Liability**

Panola Schools will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

While Panola Schools employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

Panola Schools will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

**Disclaimer**

The District makes no guarantees about the quality of the services provided and is not responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the unauthorized use of the Accounts. The District also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the Account.

Any statement, accessible on the computer network or the Internet, is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of the District, its affiliates, or employees.

Account users are responsible for any losses sustained by the District or its affiliates, resulting from the Account users' intentional misuse of the Accounts.

**Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

The use of the Account is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the restriction or cancellation of the Account. Inappropriate use may lead to any disciplinary and/or legal action, including but not limited to suspension or expulsion or dismissal from employment from the District, or criminal prosecution by government authorities. The District will attempt to tailor any disciplinary action to meet the specific concerns related to each violation.

The user of electronic information resources agrees to accept full responsibility for his/her use and will hold the District harmless for any damages resulting from use of the resources, whether that injury or damage is to the user or to another person.

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Dismissal from employment from the district
- Legal action and/or prosecution

This Technology AUP was developed by the Technology Committee and approved by the Panola Schools District Board of Trustees.

**I have read and understood this Acceptable Use Policy and agree to abide by it:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**I have read and discussed this Acceptable Use Policy with my child:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)