

COMPUTER USE AND DATA MANAGEMENT

August 2009

Policy CQ

The Superintendent and Director of Technology shall oversee the District's electronic communications system and work with the Education Service Center Region VI and TEA network staff, as appropriate.

Access to the district's electronic communications systems, including the Internet and district telephone system, is primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use of the systems is permitted if it:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the district
- Does not unduly burden the district's computer or network resources
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance

Each employee is required to read and sign the "Acceptable Use of Technology" form at the beginning of each school year.

E-Mail

E-mail is a district service provided by public funds. It is for instructional, administrative, and limited personal use. Sending jokes, chain letters, etc. via e-mail is considered as an inappropriate use of district equipment.

E-mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications systems are not confidential and can be monitored at any time by designated district staff to ensure appropriate use.

The e-mail system is filtered for both content and "junk mail".

E-mail is a public document and can become part of a legal process.

Employees must check their e-mail transmissions at least once per school day.

Building administrators should approve an e-mail distributed to an entire campus staff.

Revealing personal addresses or phone numbers of others is prohibited.

E-mail should be professional in nature, to the point, and signed.

Use good judgment in forwarding any e-mail. Ensure that privacy considerations are taken into account.

Use proper e-mail etiquette as described below.

E-Mail Etiquette

System users are expected to observe the e-mail etiquette listed below.

- Be polite; messages typed in capital letters are the equivalent of shouting and are considered rude.
- Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language are prohibited.
- Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is considered inappropriate.
- Transmitting obscene messages or pictures is prohibited.
- Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail by considering whether a file may be too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system or may be in a format unreadable by the recipient.

Social Networking (MySpace, Facebook, etc.)

School faculty and staff are expected to behave honorably in both real and virtual (online) spaces. Activities which are improper, unethical, illegal, or which cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents, or other members of the school community should be judiciously avoided in both physical space and cyberspace.

Guidelines for Use of Social Networks by School faculty and Staff

1. Exercise appropriate discretion when using social networks for personal communications (friends, colleagues, parents, former students, etc.)
2. Accept social network friend requests only with alumni over the age of 18. Recognize that many former students have online connections with current students, and that information shared between school adults and former students is likely to be seen by current students as well.
3. Remind all other members of your network of your position as an educator whose profile may be accessed by current or former students, and to monitor their posts to your network accordingly. Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends' sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site whether posted by you or someone else.
4. Faculty who use social networks should do so using their own name, not a pseudonym or nickname.

User Responsibility

- All computer workstations should be turned off at the end of each workday.
- Printing of documents should be limited to one copy. Additional copies for classroom or staff training can be made on district copiers.
- Sites accessible via the Network/Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or controversial. Although the district will attempt to limit access to objectionable material by using filtering software, controlling all materials on the Network/Internet is impossible. A user must not knowingly attempt to access inappropriate material. If a user accidentally reaches such material, they must immediately back out of the area on the Internet. The user must then notify the Technology Department of the site address so that it can be removed from accessibility through the filtering software.
- The district's technology department provides technical support. If an employee is in need of technical assistance, they should contact the district's Department of Technology.

Inappropriate Use of School Computers

- Using the system for any illegal purpose including, but not limited to: hacking, transmission or downloading of pornography, fraud, and participation in terrorist activity or purchasing illegal substances.
- Accessing or borrowing someone's account with or without permission.
- Downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder.

- Posting messages or accessing materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Wasting school resources through the improper use of the computer system.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.
- Accessing the COCISD network with personal computer equipment.
- Using the network in any way that restricts bandwidth that is not school related. (e.g., music, games, etc.)
- Use of proxies is strictly prohibited.
- Accessing chat rooms and other instant messaging services.
- Creation of or posting of web pages that are commercial in nature.
- Creating or posting viruses or other destructive programs.
- Adding or removing computer files or software.
- Streaming music/video not related to a class project or other approved activity.
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding students and employees.
- All other inappropriate uses as deemed by school officials.

Consequences of Violations

Employees and students who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the district's communications systems policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary or legal action. District administrators will make the final determination as to what constitutes inappropriate use. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Director of Technology.

Computer Software

It is the practice of the district to respect all computer software copyrights and to adhere to the terms of all software licenses to which the district is a party. The Director of Technology is charged with the responsibility of enforcing these guidelines.

District employees, students, and volunteers may not duplicate any licensed software or related documentation for use either on the district's premises or elsewhere unless the Department of Technology is authorized to do so by agreement with the licensor. Unauthorized duplication of software may subject the employee and/or the school district to both civil and criminal penalties under the United States Copyright Act.

All computer software on district equipment must be installed by the Department of Technology or designee. Software acquisition channels are restricted to ensure that the school district has a complete record of all software that has been purchased for district computers and can register, support, and upgrade the software. Software on district computers must be approved by the Director of Curriculum and the Department of Technology.

Web Authoring

The district and each campus have an authorized web site. Students, district employees, and community members are strictly prohibited from authoring a private website which represents itself as the official site for the district. District employees, trustees, and members of the public are not permitted to publish personal web pages using district resources.

Teachers and other instructional personnel are strongly encouraged to develop professional web pages in coordination with the Director of Technology or designee. Web pages should be used to enhance flow of information from the campuses to the students and parents.

Electronic Records Retention Requirements

Electronic records are the information that is maintained in electronic format in a computer for and the product of computer processing. This includes any information produced by e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, etc. These procedures apply to any electronic mail messages created, received, retained, used, or disposed of using the C-OCISD's electronic mail system. C-OCISD's approved retention schedule lists the record series that are created and the retention period for each series. It is the content and function of an e-mail or other electronic message that determines the retention period for that message. All electronic messages sent or received by COCISD are considered a COCISD record. Therefore, all electronic messages, including e-mail, must be retained or disposed of according to the C-OCISD's retention schedule. Electronic messages usually, but not always, fall into the Correspondence and Internal Memoranda record series.

COCISD will electronically archive all email sent to cocisd.org accounts.

Disclaimer

The Computer Use and Data Management Guidelines apply to all computers owned by COCISD. The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services it is providing and is not responsible for any damages suffered by users. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or user errors or omissions. The district is not responsible for phone/credit card bills or any other charges incurred by users. Use of any information obtained via the Network/Internet is at the user's own risk. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials on any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's electronic communications