

0.0 BOARD POLICY

Network and Internet Acceptable Use

It is the belief of the Forsyth County Board of Education that the use of technology for the purpose of instruction and operation is an important part of preparing children to thrive in the 21st century and in providing a modern and efficient workplace for staff. The Board further believes that a technology-rich environment can significantly enhance both the teaching and learning process. This technology includes – but is not limited to – computer hardware, software, wired and wireless network connectivity, and access to the Internet. Due to the complex nature of these systems and the magnitude of information available via the Internet, the Forsyth County Board of Education believes guidelines regarding responsible use are warranted in order to serve the educational needs of students and workplace needs of staff.

It shall be the policy of the Forsyth County Board of Education that the school system shall have in continuous operation, with respect to any devices using district-provided network resources have:

1. A qualifying “technology protection measure,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(1) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000; and
2. Procedures or guidelines developed by the superintendent, administrators and/or other appropriate personnel which provide for monitoring the online activities of users and the use of the chosen technology protection measure to protect against access through such computers to visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) harmful to minors, as those terms are defined in Section 1703(b)(1) and (2) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000. Additionally, those measures will also include staff behavior on district-provided devices and services. Such procedures or guidelines shall be designed to:
 - a. Provide for monitoring the online activities of users to prevent, to the extent practicable, access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet;
 - b. Educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act.
 - c. Prevent unauthorized access, including hacking, denial-of-service, credential theft, and other unauthorized activities by minors and staff;
 - d. Prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors and staff; and
 - e. Restrict minors' access to materials “harmful to minors,” as that term is defined in Section 1703(b)(2) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000; and
 - f. The Forsyth County Board of Education will adopt and maintain a procedure manual that outlines and mandates the operation of a reliable, safe, and secure network for all students, teachers, and staff.

The district's technology resources are provided for educational and instructional purposes that promote and are consistent with the instructional goals of the Forsyth County School System or are for the business operations/use by FCS staff. Use of computers and network resources outside the scope of these purposes is strictly prohibited. Students and employees accessing network services, or any device utilizing those services, shall comply with the district's responsible use guidelines. The district reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose the contents of any user's files, activities, or communications without the consent of the user.

It must also be understood that the Internet is a global, fluid community, which remains largely unregulated. While it is an extremely valuable tool for instructional and operational uses, there are sections that are not commensurate with community, school, or family standards. It is the belief of the Board that the Internet's advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. The Forsyth County Board of Education will, through its administrative staff, provide an Internet screening system which blocks access to a large percentage of inappropriate sites. It should not be assumed, however, that users are completely prevented from accessing inappropriate materials or from sending or receiving objectionable communications.

Additionally, access to the Internet and computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, users violating the Forsyth County Board of Education's responsible use policy shall be subject to revocation of these privileges and potential disciplinary action.