
**CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

BOARD POLICY IJND: TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

I. Introduction/Purpose

- A. Carroll County Public Schools support and encourage two-way channels of communication between the school system, the citizenry of the county, and the global community. All uses of telecommunication facilities shall be for the purpose of furthering the educational goals of Carroll County Public Schools.
- B. Board Policy IJND -Telecommunications Policy states: “The use of the Internet and other advanced technology has the potential to vastly change the way students learn, particularly the way they search for information. The Internet and other modes of telecommunication provide a gateway to a broad array of instructional resources for both students and staff. The Carroll County public school system recognizes the potentially positive impact technology could have on education while recognizing the challenges it also presents. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for the appropriate use of these resources by all employees.”
- C. To ensure that all employees understand the procedures for using telecommunication facilities, each staff member is required to sign the *Carroll County Public Schools Telecommunication Acceptable Use Procedures for Employees* prior to gaining access to the Internet or Intranet.
- D. The purpose of this document is to set forth guidelines that outline the proper use of telecommunication facilities and be used as a companion to the *Carroll County Public Schools Telecommunication Acceptable Use Procedures for Employees*.

II. Definitions

- A. “Telecommunication facilities” includes all forms of electronic communication, whether currently in use or possible future use. At the time these guidelines were drafted, telecommunication facilities included telephones, television, computers, and the networks and cabling by which they communicate with each other, including all their capacities for:
 - 1. Transmitting and receiving email or any other form of electronic written or verbal communication;
 - 2. Posting material on Internet and Intranet websites;
 - 3. Linking to other websites;

4. Accessing Internet and Intranet websites.
- B. "Computers" includes all computers used by employees, including:
1. Computers contained within the Carroll County Public Schools' networks;
 2. Computers in communication with the Carroll County Public Schools' networks;
 3. Computers used by employees, even if privately owned, when there is a legally sufficient relation to the school system that its use affects the safe and orderly operation of the school system.

III. Guidelines for Employees

- A. All uses of telecommunication facilities shall be lawful and in accordance with school policies and regulations.
1. Laws and regulations governing telecommunications include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Federal
 - (1) CHIP (Children's Internet Protection Act, 47 U.S.C. §254(h), et seq.);
 - (2) FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232G);
 - (3) Copyright Act of 1976
 - b. State
 - (1) Maryland Public Information Act (State Govt. Code Ann. § 10-611 et seq.)
 - (2) COMAR (Code of Maryland Regulations), Title 13A
- B. School policies and regulations:
1. All faculty and staff should familiarize themselves with the contents of these Board of Education policies and the supporting regulations found in the Pupil Services Handbook.
 - a. ADD: Violent Acts Prohibited
 - b. GBAA: Sexual Harassment
 - c. GBI: Political Activities of Board of Education Employees
 - d. IJND: Telecommunications Policy
 - e. IKAB: Communicating Student Progress
 - f. JBG: Student Participation in Political Activities
 - g. JF: Students' Responsibilities and Rights

- h. JK: Discipline
- i. JLF: Child Abuse - Child Neglect - Staff Dating Students
- j. KGF: Community Use of School Facilities
- k. KJ: Advertising in Schools
- l. Serious Threats of Violence regulation
- m. Distribution of Publications regulations

C. General rules for staff use of telecommunications:

- 1. No prohibited activity becomes permissible merely because telecommunication facilities are used. For example:
 - a. An advertisement for tobacco products, which would be forbidden in a school newspaper, is also forbidden on a school website.
 - b. An obscene joke or cartoon, a paper copy of which could not be properly given by a staff member to a student or vice versa, is not permitted to be transmitted from a staff member to student or vice versa by email.
 - c. A sexually explicit magazine that could not properly be purchased by the school library can not be accessed via the Internet.
 - d. Personally identifiable student information that could not properly be revealed on paper or over the telephone may not be revealed by email or through a website.
 - e. A staff member who has a duty to report wrongdoing by another teacher or student has the same duty, regardless of whether the wrongdoing occurred over the Internet or through email, or whether he or she learned of the conduct over the Internet or through email.

D. Specific Guidelines: The following specific guidelines address situations where the unfamiliarity with particular telecommunication facilities might cause questions or uncertainty about the application of existing rules and/or procedures.

- 1. Websites
 - a. Access. Since website search engines make it possible to locate particular types of material, it is important that identifiable student information not be published on the Internet.
 - b. Identifiable student information includes:

- (1) Student's name
- (2) Parent's or guardian's name
- (3) Family member's name
- (4) Student's address
- (5) Student's phone numbers
- (6) Social Security numbers
- (7) Student numbers
- (8) Personal characteristics or other information that would make it possible to identify a student with reasonable certainty.

c. Linking. Staff needs to be aware that hypertext links accessible from the Carroll County Public Schools' website or other approved Internet sites may eventually lead to the access of inappropriate materials.

d. Advertising. The presence of advertising on the Internet poses two problems: linking (see above) and ad content.

- (1) Every advertisement on the Internet permits the user to click on the ad and thereby go immediately to the advertiser's website which may then link to inappropriate sites for students.

- (2) The Carroll County Public Schools' Pupil Services Handbook contains the following statement regarding prohibited advertising: "Advertising content deemed unacceptable for distribution within the Carroll County Public School System includes, but is not limited to, the following: obscenities, alcoholic beverages, drugs, drug paraphernalia, contraceptives, abortion services, sexual deviation, tobacco products, fortune telling, palm reading, mind reading, defamatory falsehoods, attacks on person(s) or group(s), or statements of discrimination towards race, culture, religion, or sex."

e. Content. The content of any website is unsubstantiated.

f. Blocking/filtering software. The Carroll County Public Schools computer network is subject to filtering software that blocks material that is obscene, child pornography, and harmful to minors. However, the filter is not 100% effective in eliminating inappropriate material. In addition, it is possible to bypass filters to access inappropriate materials.

g. Website Development: Staff may:

- (1) Not post photographs of students or identifiable student information without obtaining a release [see D. 1. a. above].
- (2) Not post student artwork (paintings, stories, poetry, etc.) on the web without proper copyright notices and written permission from the student.
- (3) Not create links to outside websites that may or are known to contain objectionable material.
- (4) Not post advertisements on websites without following Board Policy KJ on Advertising in School.
- (5) Not incorporate copyrighted material on websites without permission of the copyright holder.
- (6) Use school website to provide copies of a research paper the teacher wrote on a subject related to the class.
- (7) Not post student grades on websites that are not password protected.
- (8) Maintain a website to provide information to students, parents, and employees, pertaining to such matters as the school calendar, lunch menus, directions to the school, business telephone numbers for staff, and information about field trips

h. Staff website recommendations for students: Staff should:

- (1) Verify the content of the website in advance and ensure that it has a good reputation. However, be aware that website content can change without notification.
- (2) Not encourage students to go online and search via ordinary adult search engines. Instead, recommend search facilities which are suitable for the age group involved.
- (3) Supervise and monitor online activities of minors.

- (4) Instruct students on “Acceptable Use Procedures for Students”
2. Email: The school system maintains the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any email at any time and without prior notice.
Staff should:
 - a. Use email at school for educational purposes only.
 - b. Understand that they are responsible for understanding and properly using the features of email.
 - c. Familiarize themselves with their email program's features and ensure that their email practices comply.
 - d. Ensure that all volunteers under their supervision are properly trained in the responsible and ethical use of telecommunication facilities in accordance with these policies.
 - e. Ensure that all students under their supervision are properly trained in the responsible and ethical use of telecommunication facilities in accordance with these policies.
 - f. Not send any information via email that they would not put on school system letterhead.
 - g. Not say or send anything in email that could not be appropriately communicated face-to-face in a school setting.
 - h. Not permit email to facilitate improper relationships between employees and students.
 - i. Avoid sending sensitive, confidential information via email.
 - j. Not send copyrighted material via email.
 - k. Ensures that all email is properly addressed and contain only the material that should be sent to the addressee.
 - l. Never send anonymous email.
 - m. Use email to send a message to students regarding a homework assignment or further discussion on a class topic.

- n. Not email students to engage in illegal sexual harassment.
- o. Not use email to spread political views to other employees or to students.
- p. Not use school computers to send private (i.e., not related to the Carroll County Public Schools' educational mission) email messages.

IV. PRIVACY DISCLOSURE

Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for educational purposes only. The Carroll County Public Schools reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the Carroll County Public Schools and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

V. FAILURE TO FOLLOW PROCEDURES

A student's use of the computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this Policy shall, at a minimum, have his or her access to the computer network and Internet terminated and Carroll County Public Schools may refuse to reinstate such privileges for the remainder of the student's enrollment.

VI. WARRANTIES/INDEMNIFICATION

Carroll County Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this Policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of its computer networks or the Internet under this Policy. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to cooperate with the School in the event of the School's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to its computer network and the Internet, whether that use is on a school computer or on another computer outside of the school.