

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

INTERNAL BOARD POLICIES

Information Technology Services Acceptable Usage Policy

General Policy

One of the educational objectives for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is to guarantee that every student, teacher, and administrator can use technology and the Internet to prepare for responsible citizenship and productive employment both today and into the future. To successfully prepare for the future and affect great change, certain key tools are essential. The Internet is one of the key tools that will provide students the opportunity to monitor their own learning, plan effectively, demonstrate open-mindedness, and push the limits of their own abilities. It is an absolute necessity for students to acquire and use sophisticated technological skills and to develop keen intellectual habits.

Prince George's County Public Schools views technology (including computers, scanners, digital cameras, video projectors, video cameras, and the Internet) as instructional tools for learning. As such, policies and procedures outlined in the Student Code of Student Conduct apply to the use of all technology tools. Technology in our schools includes using a single computer, a computer on a classroom network, or a computer accessing the Internet. This set of guidelines is intended to assist users in following established practices and procedures to use technology in a responsible and productive manner.

General Procedures: Use of the PGCPS Network

The Prince George's County Public Schools' Wide Area Network (WAN) has been created to link school buildings, administrative sites, and support facilities together for the purposes of accessing and sharing information in accordance with the goals and objectives set forth by Prince George's County Public Schools. The Prince George's County Public Schools Local Area Networks (LAN's) have been created to interconnect desktops, printers, and other devices at the building level to collaborate and share

information. All users are expected to use these networks, including the Internet, in conjunction with these goals and objectives.

Who is covered by the AUP?

The PGCPs Wide Area Network is designed to bring information and resources to all students, staff members and employees of Prince George's County Schools through electronic telecommunications. All users are expected to follow the accepted and established guidelines listed in this document. A user is defined as a person in one of these groups.

Expectations

Any student who is a user of the PGCPs Network is expected to use this resource for educational purposes only. Employees, authorized contractors and volunteers of Prince George's County Public Schools are expected to use this resource for educational and/or PGCPs administrative purposes only. Any use of the PGCPs Network and the Internet should always reflect academic honesty, high ethical standards, and moral responsibility.

Procedures for Use

- All users are responsible for their own accounts.
- **All users are prohibited from sharing accounts and/or passwords with anyone.**
- Any school or administrative entity may be represented by a website on the pgcps.org web site.
- No local accounts can be created on computers without prior approval from the Division of Information Technology (IT).
- No school or administrative entity may be represented by a web site outside of the pgcps.org domain without expressed written permission from the Chief Executive Officer.
- Any principal or supervisor may request a web account on the pgcps.org web server(s). Only one website per school or administrative office will be issued.
- A web site account with login and password information will be issued to the supervisor or principal requesting the account. The person issued the account is responsible for the content and management of the web site.
- Personnel from the Division of Information Technology and school based technology coordinators are the only individuals who will have administrative rights to computers on the PGCPs domain.

- The web manager duties can be relegated to any person of designated by the principal or supervisor responsible for the account. No student, at any time or for any reason whatsoever, should be given the web site password.
- Users with administrative rights may only install software/hardware approved by PGCPS.
- All computers are to be joined to the PGCPS domain unless exempted by the Division of Information Technology
- All computers are to have working anti-virus protection with updated definitions. Preferably our PGCPS network wide standard version of managed anti-virus.
- All computers are to be kept up to date in terms of patches and service packs. If possible, part of our managed infrastructure.
- Only users with administrative rights may install new hardware/software to a computer on the PGCPS domain (Most users do not have this right).
- No student is to be given administrative rights to any computer within the PGCPS domain.
- No student, nor teacher, at any time or for any reasons whatsoever should be given the sysop or other administrator password.
- Students may only access information they are authorized to use, and needed for assignments and other school related activities.
- All users should protect their accounts by changing their password, as required, and keeping their password confidential.
- Students are to log off all systems before they leave their workstation.
- All users who are assigned a permanent workstation are to log off or lock their system when they are away from their computer.
- All users will be held accountable for any violations of the Acceptable Use Policy that can be traced to their individual accounts.
- All users are responsible for their own data and system data from which they work with. Sensitive information should be stored in the user's personal network folder (if available). All files should also be backed up to an external media (CD or other removable disk) and stored in a secure place. Certain critical sites will have building backups, but only for redirected My Documents or office group shares.

Technology Acceptable Uses

Acceptable use of technology and all related resources requires users to:

- Protect private information such as addresses, phone numbers, or passwords.
- Use appropriate language. This applies to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.
- Respect all copyright laws.
- Respect network limitation when sending or receiving information.
- Use the computers for their intended educational purposes only.
- Understand that use of the computer or the network for illegal activities is strictly prohibited.

Prohibitions

The following actions are prohibited to all users of the PGCPS Network. They include but are not limited to:

- Group account log-ins.
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks, degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance.
- Trespassing in another's files, folders, or work.
- Utilizing the network for commercial purposes.
- Accessing websites that contain material deemed vulgar or offensive. These include, but are not limited to websites containing any text, graphic, audio or visual representation of sex, acts of perversion, or any vulgar or obscene material, or that contain images or representations of full frontal or partial nudity lacking in any educational, scientific or artistic value. Users should avoid these websites and should under no circumstances possess any of these materials on their computer.
- Accessing websites that contain materials deemed inappropriate. These include but are not limited to web sites containing any text, graphic, audio or visual representation of materials that contradict the morals and values of the Prince George's County Public Schools. All users are to avoid websites promoting hatred, racial/religious/sexual discrimination, use of illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco,

- criminal activities, computer/network hacking; except for educational purposes related to carrying out job responsibilities.
- Using the PGCPs WAN or email to promote the annoyance, harassment or attack of others.
 - Purporting to misrepresent PGCPs in any way whatsoever.
 - Utilizing the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other licenses or contracts.
 - Accessing “chat lines” or entering “chat rooms” which are not a part of a class activity, directly under the supervision of a teacher, or are educationally inappropriate.
 - Using abusive or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages.
 - Posting anonymous messages
 - Causing undue congestion of the network through lengthy downloads of files, or by engaging in idle activities; e.g., games not part of a class activity.
 - Vandalizing the data of another user.
 - Attempting to gain unauthorized access to resources, files, or any device on the network; e.g., use of hacking, spy ware tools, etc.
 - Identifying one’s self with another person’s name or any misrepresentation of one’s true identity.
 - Using an account or password of another user
 - The theft of data, equipment, or intellectual property.

Web Services

The web presence of our school system has become an integral part of communicating with our stakeholders. One of the stated goals for PGCPs is to deliver services by way of enhanced effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. The use of the Internet and the World Wide Web is helping the school system achieve this goal through the use of its website.

Another stated objective is that, “Family, school, business and community relationships will be strengthened to support improved student achievement”. By delivering timely and accurate information, instructional resources and reliable communication links, the

website for Prince George's County Public Schools is an important part of the operations of the school system.

Prince George's County Public Schools views its web site as instructional and communication resource. As such, policies and procedures outline in the Student code of Student Conduct apply to the use of it's website. This set of guidelines is intended to assist users in following established practices and procedures to develop the web site in a responsible and productive manner.

Web Acceptable Uses

Acceptable use of PGCPS Web Sites and all related resources requires web managers to:

- Use the web site to improve communications and services of the school or office with students, staff, parents and the entire community of Prince George's County Public Schools.
- Protect private information such as addresses, phone numbers, or passwords.
- Use appropriate language.
- Respect all copyright laws
- Respect network limitations when posting web data.
- Use the issued web account for the intended educational and administrative purposes only.
- Understand that use of the web site for illegal activities is strictly prohibited.
- In the use of photography on a web page, when identifying a specific person by first and last name, written permission by way of the standard PGCPS release should be on file. Group or candid photographs are not subjected to the use of a release.

Prohibitions

The following actions are prohibited to all web managers of the PGCPS.ORG website. They include but are not limited to:

- Displaying logo of any commercial entity not directly related to Prince George's County Public School.
- Displaying a copyrighted material, including graphics, without specific written permission to do so.

- Using a. pgcps.org web site for anything other than educational or administrative purposes as deemed appropriate by PGCPS. This includes having links to any external site that does not directly relate to the instructional and/or administrative goals of PGCPS.
- Posting any files, which prove detrimental to the performance the web services. This includes unauthorized scripts, programs and files of large size that may impede network operations.
- Utilizing the network for commercial purposes.
- Linking to any websites that contain materials deemed inappropriate. These include but are not limited to web sites containing any text, graphic, audio or visual representation of materials that contradict the morals and values of the Prince George’s County Public Schools. All users are to avoid websites promoting hatred, racial/religious/sexual discrimination, use of illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco, criminal activities, computer/network hacking; except for educational purposes related to carrying out job responsibilities.
- Using PGCPS web site to promote the annoyance or harassment of others.
- Purporting to misrepresent PGCPS in any way whatsoever.
- Utilizing the web site for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other licenses or contracts.
- Having any link accessing “chat lines” or entering “chat rooms” which are not a part of a class activity, directly under the supervision of a teacher, or are educationally inappropriate.
- Using abusive or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages.

Process for Reporting Inappropriate Use of the Network or Web Site

If a user believes that there has been a violation of these guidelines, the user is to contact a teacher, school administrator or supervisor immediately. A good rule of thumb would be - “when in doubt ... ask.”

Consequences

If it has been determined that a user has improperly used the equipment or its resources in any manner, the user can expect disciplinary actions which may include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate suspension of equipment access
- Disciplinary action by school/office administration
- Letter of reprimand
- Arrest and prosecution
- Additional disciplinary action may take place as outlined

Cell Phones or Nextel Devices

Prince George's County Public Schools offers cell phones and/or "Nextel" devices to selected staff members. Cell phones are provided to all Board Members, senior school system administrative staff, and those staff members deemed eligible by their respective divisional Chief.

At this time, schools and offices that wish to purchase cell phones for staff must do so with local funding sources, and must obtain the approval of their Regional Executive Director, or divisional Chief.

Calling plans and pricing structure for devices provided through Cingular Wireless and Nextel is in accordance with existing State of Maryland telecommunications contracts. Pricing plans, phone costs, and general information is available through the Office of Telephone Services.

Cell phones and "Nextel" devices are issued with the understanding that they are for the sole purpose of conducting official school system business and are not intended as "personal" devices. PGCPSS is due reimbursement for any charges incurred by the user for personal calls. Reimbursement rates will be directly aligned with users "calling plans".

Technical support will be provided through the Division of Information Technology by contacting the Office of Telephone Services at 301-925-2890 or e-mail to telserv@pgcps.org; or by calling the Help Desk at 301-386-1549, or e-mail to helpdesk@pgcps.org.

Replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged phones and/or accessories will be the responsibility of the user.

SPAM

PGCPSS recognizes and is concerned about the proliferation of unwanted e-mail (SPAM) throughout the County, and the costs associated with this issue and the cost in productivity associated with deleting these messages. Current policy dictates that users should treat this e-mail as "junk" and delete it as it arrives.

The Division of Information Technology intends to escalate this issue with automated solutions. Outlined, herein, are some definitions of SPAM, including techniques used by “spammers” and suggested methods of dealing with it.

“SPAM” E-mail is basically electronic junk mail. An electronic message (E-mail) is considered “SPAM” if all of the following characteristics are present:

- The recipient's personal identity and context are irrelevant because the message is equally applicable to many other potential recipients.
- The recipient has not verifiably granted deliberate, explicit, and still-revocable permission for it to be sent.
- The transmission and reception of the message appears to the recipient to give a disproportionate benefit to the sender.

E-mail addresses used for “SPAM” are collected through a variety of methods. Below, you will find a few of the ways “spammers” acquire addresses. “Spammers” will:

- Run programs that collect email addresses from header information.
- Gather them from subscriber lists, such as list servers.
- Use web-crawling programs that look for mailto: codes in HTML documents (web pages).
- Collect them from online "white pages" directories.
- Buy a list from someone who already has one that was collected using one of these methods.
- Take them from you without your knowledge when you visit their web site.
- Connect to a host computer illegally to find online users addresses.
- Collect member names from online "chat rooms".
- Etc.

Users should only use their Prince George’s County Public Schools E-mail address for school system business. Users are advised to acquire and use a “personal” e-mail address when signing up for list servers, circulars, newsletters, etc. Users can get free E-mail accounts from Hotmail, Yahoo, and others. These providers offer a web interface to send/receive your personal e-mail, which can be accessed via our Internet connection.

This is advisable not only to avoid SPAM, but it is also important because certain harmful viruses propagate through e-mail attachments. While this procedure will minimize spam, it will not prevent it completely. Some of our web pages contain user's E-mail addresses that have been which have been collected from "spammers". Users are advised to open E-mail only from people known, and delete any E-mail thought to be SPAM.

Clear out your e-mail trash bin regularly.

The Division of Information Technology is currently performing extensive tests in order to implement SPAM filtering into our E-mail system. Our goal is to utilize all three of the protocols outlined below. Our intention is to discover the best combination of approaches in order to eliminate the most SPAM while preserving the reliability and integrity of our E-mail system. All undeliverable e-mail will be dropped due to SPAM Impersonation.

- Real-time Black hole Lists (RBL): Lists maintained by companies, which contain a list of IP addresses, whose owners refuse to stop the propagation of SPAM. The RBL usually lists server IP addresses from Internet Service Providers (ISP) whose customers are responsible for the SPAM and from ISP's whose servers are hijacked for SPAM relay. There are many different lists offered and many factors have to be taken into account when selecting the right list or lists for our company. Some of these factors are: false positive ratio, what percentage of SPAM it blocks, and how often it is updated.
- Heuristic SPAM Detection: Software which looks at the headers of E-mail messages for various clues and performs various queries in an attempt to determine if a message is SPAM or not. It then assigns a weighted scale score to each identified characteristic found. The numerical total of these scores is compared against a threshold value. If the numerical total exceeds this threshold, then based on our settings, the message is either removed or sent to a quarantine area.
- Subject Line Blocking: Software setting on our Mail Gateway or our E-mail Servers which allows us to scan E-mails for various characters or phrases. Some of the common characters or phrases that are noted in SPAM messages are: < > + ^ % \$ # _ | { } [] () \ / "free" "FREE".

It is a goal of the Division of Information Technology to utilize one or all of the protocols listed herein to develop a viable approach to SPAM detection and elimination.

Dial-Up Network Access

The Division of Information Technology provides filtered dial-up network access to selected staff members. Dial-up access provides free Internet, access to internal web sites;

connectivity to the HP computer centers at Eleanor Roosevelt and Crossland High Schools; the AS/400 Student Information System; and Mainframe S/390, etc.

Dial-up access is authorized for the following groups; approved on an individual basis:

- Board Members
- Principals
- IT Staff
- Schedulers
- Regional Executive Directors
- Instructional Supervisors
- Senior Staff
- Other staff as approved by the Chief Information Officer

Maximum access is 56K.

IT staff will provide any required software, or training. Hardware (modem) and phone line are the user's responsibility.

Support for dial-up services will be provided through the Division of Information Technology Help Desk during regular operating hours. Phone 301-386-1549, or e-mail to helpdesk@pgcps.org.

Virtual Private Network (VPN) Access

The Division of Information Technology currently offers VPN access to a limited number of staff. VPN access is currently limited to senior IT staff and IT professionals working off site in support of the Oracle project, or staff approved by the Chief Information Officer. VPN access is restricted to those with high-speed Internet connections only; DSL or cable modem (PGCPS does not provide these devices or internet access). As new technology becomes available at a reasonable cost, we will migrate to a more current version of software and hardware.

IT staff will provide any required software and training. Hardware (modem and/or router) is the user's responsibility. A recommended list of acceptable equipment is available through the Division of Information Technology.

Support for VPN service will be provided through the Division of Information Technology Help Desk during regular operating hours. Phone 301-386-1549, or e-mail to helpdesk@pgcps.org.

Personal Data Assistant (PDA) DEVICES

The Division of Information Technology will support only those PDA's that meet the following requirements:

- Only devices manufactured by PALM, Dell, HP or Compaq are acceptable.
- The device must use PALM Desktop or Pocket PC Software.
- User is responsible for the purchase and maintenance of their Palm or Pocket PC device. We will not replace any broken devices or batteries.

The user's computer must meet the following requirements:

- OS: Windows 2000/XP, Mac OSX.
- 600 MB of disk space available.
- USB or serial port.
- The user must have a valid PGCPs e-mail account.

The Division of Information Technology will provide the following support:

- Synchronization of PGCPs e-mail accounts, calendar, and tasks through your computer via USB or serial cable (we will not support wireless connections).
- Training on synchronization between PDA and computer.

Support requests are to be made through the Help Desk at 301-386-1549, or e-mail to helpdesk@pgcps.org.

Replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged personal data devices and/or related accessories is the responsibility of the user.

Wireless E-mail Devices

Prince George's County Public Schools offers wireless e-mail service thru Good Technology, Inc., provided by Cingular Wireless, and provide devices for any PGCPs employee that holds a position of Director or above, or approved by the Chief Information Officer. The division of Information Technology will provide eligible employees' access to our GoodLink server, monthly airtime, any applicable licensing, or software maintenance fees and the device. Our GoodLink Server provides the ability to access PGCPs e-mail accounts, wirelessly, from any location, without requiring cradle synchronization.

We currently support the following wireless e-mail devices:

- Rim 957
- Good G100

As new devices and/or technologies become available, we will migrate to the most current relevant technology and version of code.

The vendor (Cingular Wireless) will deliver devices to the Division of Information Technology for programming prior to delivery to the end user.

Technical support will be provided through the Division of Information Technology Help Desk at 301-386-1549, or email to helpdesk@pgcps.org.

Replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged wireless e-mail devices and/or related accessories is the responsibility of the user.

Fax Machines

Prince George's County Public School will provide analog phone lines to support fax machines.

The Division of Information Technology will not support the hardware, software, or provide training for fax machines.