

5180 EMPLOYEE ACCEPTABLE USE

Adopted 5/19/08
Revised 7/28/10

It is the objective of the ABSS Board of Education to make appropriate electronic information resources available to employees to assist in furthering educational goals, to support valid business uses, and to provide for efficient work-related communication. This policy governs the use of Alamance-Burlington School System electronic information resources and defines employees' proper conduct and responsibilities while using any school system electronic information resources. Employees are defined as all teachers, administration and staff. This policy also applies to any other users who are expressly authorized by the Alamance-Burlington School System to use electronic information resources, including, but not limited to, Board of Education members, contractors, consultants, and temporary workers.

Electronic information resources are defined as all computer equipment, including any desktop or laptop computers or other hardware, that is owned or leased by the school system; e-mail accounts; the Alamance-Burlington School System computer network; and any computer software licensed to the Alamance-Burlington School System.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for enforcing this policy for all employees who they supervise.

In accordance with federal law, the Alamance-Burlington School System will take appropriate measures including the use of filtering or blocking software or services ("filters") in an effort to block access to language and visual depictions that are obscene, lewd, pornographic or harmful to minors.

Appropriate Use

All users are expected to exercise good judgment, use computer resources in a professional manner, and adhere to this policy and all applicable laws and regulations.

Use of electronic information resources is expected to be related to the school system's goals of educating students and/or conducting school system business. The board recognizes, however, that some personal use is inevitable, and that incidental and occasional personal use that is infrequent or brief in duration is permitted so long as it occurs on personal time, does not interfere with the employee's work or school system business, and is not otherwise prohibited by board policy or regulations, Alamance-Burlington School System procedures, or applicable law.

Software

Software is licensed to the Alamance-Burlington School System by a large number of vendors and may have specific license restrictions regarding copying or using a particular program. Users must obtain permission from the Technology Services Department prior to copying or loading school system software onto any computer, whether the computer is privately owned or is a Alamance-Burlington School System computer.

The use of non-Alamance-Burlington School System software on any school system computers (including laptops, desktops, and the network) is discouraged. Prior to loading any software, an employee must receive express permission from the Technology Services Department. The use of such software will be subject to any restrictions imposed by the Technology Services Department. All software must be legally licensed by the user or the Alamance-Burlington School System prior to loading onto school system equipment. The unauthorized use of and/or copying of software is illegal.

The Alamance-Burlington School System network may not be used for downloading entertainment software or other files not related to the mission and objectives of the board. This prohibition pertains to freeware, shareware, copyrighted commercial and non-commercial software, and all other forms of software and files not directly related to the instructional and administrative purposes of the Alamance-Burlington School System.

Prohibited Uses

- a. Commercial Use: Using school system computers for personal or private gain, personal business, or commercial advantage is prohibited.
- b. Illegal or Inappropriate Use: Using school system computers for illegal, harassing, vandalizing, or inappropriate purposes, or in support of such activities, is prohibited.

Illegal activities are any violations of federal, state, or local laws and include, but are not limited to, copyright infringement and/or illegal file sharing; committing fraud; threatening another person; or intentionally engaging in communications for the purpose of abusing, annoying, threatening, terrifying, harassing, or embarrassing another person.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, comments, jokes, innuendoes, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, visual depictions,

pranks, or verbal conduct relating to an individual that (1) have the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (2) have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance, or (3) interfere with school operations.

Vandalism is any attempt to harm or destroy the operating system, hardware, application software, or data.

Inappropriate use is any violation of other provisions of this policy and includes, but is not limited to, using another person's ID or password; plagiarizing; accessing, producing, storing, posting, sending, displaying, or viewing inappropriate or offensive material, including pornographic, obscene, discriminatory, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually suggestive language or images, or images of exposed private body parts; and accessing material advocating illegal acts or violence, including hate literature.

c. Unauthorized Use: School system computers may only be used by staff and students, and others expressly authorized by the Technology Services Department to use the equipment.

d. Disruptive Use: School system computers may not be used to interfere with or disrupt other users, services, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising ("spam"), propagation of computer viruses, distribution of large quantities of information that may overwhelm the system (chain letters, network games, or broadcasting messages), and any unauthorized access to or destruction of school system computers or other resources accessible through the network ("cracking" or "hacking"). Disruptive use may also be considered inappropriate and/or illegal.

The following are considered disruptions and are also prohibited: posting personal or private information about the user or other people on the Internet; arranging or agreeing to meet with someone the user has met on-line for purposes other than official school business; attempting to gain unauthorized access to the Alamance-Burlington School System network; posting information that could be disrupting, cause damage, or endanger students or staff; and accessing chat-rooms or instant messaging software, unless for a valid educational purpose or official school business.

e. Any use that conflicts with any other board policy or regulations.

Electronic Communications and Use of the Internet

All employees must use the school system network when communicating electronically with students in their roles as school system employees. Employees may not use personal web sites or online networking profiles to post information in an attempt to communicate with students in their roles as school system employees.

Given the open nature of the Internet, creating or maintaining a publicly-accessible website, blog, or social networking profile is considered a form of communication accessible to students, parents, and co-workers. Any posting or maintaining of content on a website, blog, or social networking platform that adversely affects the employee's ability to perform his or her job duties may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal. Any direct electronic communications with students, parents, supervisors, or co-workers – whether by email, instant messaging, or other digital media – that adversely affects the employee's ability to perform his or her job duties may result in appropriate discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Compliance with Policy

This policy is applicable to all users of Alamance-Burlington School System computers and refers to all electronic information resources whether individually controlled, shared, stand alone, or networked. Disciplinary action, if any, for employees shall be consistent with the Alamance-Burlington School System's policies and practices. Violation of this policy may constitute cause for revocation of access privileges, suspension of access to school system computers, other disciplinary action, dismissal and/or appropriate legal action.

Monitoring / No Expectation of Privacy

Alamance-Burlington School System electronic information resources, the Internet, and use of e-mail are not inherently secure or private. Employees shall have no expectation of privacy while using school system electronic information resources. The board reserves the right to search data or e-mail stored on all school-owned or -leased computers or other electronic information resources at any time for any reason. The board reserves the right to monitor employees' use of school system electronic information resources and to take appropriate disciplinary action based on the employee's inappropriate or illegal use or use that is in violation of this policy. The board reserves the right to disclose any electronic message or data to law enforcement officials, and under some circumstances, may be required to disclose information to law enforcement officials or other third parties, for example, in response to a document production request made in a lawsuit involving the Alamance-Burlington School System or pursuant to a public records disclosure request.

Security / Care of Property

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Employees are responsible for reporting information security violations to appropriate personnel. Employees should not demonstrate the suspected security violation to other users. Unauthorized attempts to log onto any school system computer or the Alamance-Burlington School System network as

a system administrator may result in cancellation of user privileges and/or additional disciplinary action. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.

Users of Alamance-Burlington School System computers are expected to respect school system property and be responsible in using the equipment. Users are to follow all instructions regarding maintenance or care of the equipment. Users may be held responsible for any loss or damage caused by intentional or negligent acts in caring for computers while under their control. The school system is responsible for any routine maintenance or standard repairs to school system computers. Users are expected to timely notify the Technology Services Department of any need for service.

No Warranties

The Alamance-Burlington School System makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the electronic information resources it is providing. The board will not be responsible for any damages suffered by users, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-delivery, service interruptions, or any other cause. The board will not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the unauthorized use of school system electronic information resources. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The board specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its service. Users are responsible for any losses sustained by the Alamance-Burlington School System resulting from the user's intentional misuse of the school system's electronic information resources.

Application of Public Records Law

All information created or received for work purposes and stored on or contained in the school system's computer resources or electronic data files is subject to public disclosure unless an exception to the Public Records Law applies. This information may be purged or destroyed only in accordance with the applicable records retention schedule and the State Division of Archives regulations.

Employee Agreement Form

An Employee Acceptable Use Policy Agreement Form, developed by the school system, must be signed by the employee before access is permitted and an e-mail account is assigned. An employee's acceptance of the Agreement is considered a condition of employment and refusal to sign may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

LEGAL REF: 15 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq.; 16 C.F.R. Part 312; 47 U.S.C. § 254; 18 U.S.C. § 2510 et seq.; 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.; 20 U.S.C. § 6777; G.S. 14-196.3; G.S. 15A-286 to -287; G.S. 115C-47(18); G.S. 115C-325; G.S. 115C-523

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