

**Encinitas Union School District**

**Acceptable Procedures**

**For the Use of the**

**Internet and EUSD Enterprise Network**

**July, 2010**

## ACCEPTABLE PROCEDURES FOR USE OF THE INTERNET

### ALL STUDENTS USING THE INTERNET AND THEIR PARENTS MUST BE FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTENTS OF THIS PROCEDURAL PUBLICATION.

This document is intended to inform parents, students and educators regarding appropriate guidelines for use of the Internet and telecommunications by children. Additionally, it will cover Encinitas Union School District rules governing use of the Internet and give clear guidelines for parents on what they should discuss with their children regarding Internet use.

#### **I. The Internet**

The Internet is a global network made up of many smaller networks contributing to support the open exchange of information among many different kinds of institutions all over the world. This system gives immediate access to information. It's like being able to use every book in any library from one's computer. One can look at (and print) articles, documents and pictures that can be used for class work, work, and enjoyment. One can even retrieve current facts about news, weather and sports.

Before one begins to use these exciting research tools, it is important to parents, students and educators that we all understand the many consequences of the computer connections that one can make on the Internet or District Network. It is important that we understand how use of this powerful educational tool is a privilege. It can provide one with countless hours of exploration and use. Like any privilege, its use can be taken back for breaking the rules.

The Internet contains material that is not suitable for students or parents. The intent of the EUSD is to use connections on the Internet only for purposes consistent with approved curriculum. Also, the District Network has limited resources and classrooms have limited time available for network-supported teaching and learning activities; anyone who uses the network improperly will lose the privilege of using it. Additionally, the District Network cannot be used for commercial or for-profit services. This document includes the rules which must be followed and detail the proper way to use this learning tool.

#### **II. Introduction**

Technology is radically changing the way schools relate to the world. The information superhighway is a reality. Students and educators will be able to travel all over the world to gather information. As more people travel this electronic highway, maps to find information and rules to keep travel safe become vital to successful completion of the journey.

Our District Network and the Internet represent powerful educational resources which provide information in the world-wide-web electronic network. Connections to businesses, major universities, national libraries, other schools and other students around the world can be made. Just as social codes and behaviors which are acceptable at school are learned, the correct procedures and rules for using the network information services also need to be learned.

We require that all students obey the guidelines. If any of these rules are violated, the parent and student will not be allowed to continue to use the system.

At the beginning of each school year, the student and parents will sign the "Mandatory Signature Sheet" which indicates that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the school rules and Acceptable Procedures for Use of the Internet, and that they understand the consequences which result if these rules are broken. This signed statement becomes the permission slip to take trips on the information highway.

#### **III. The DISTRICT NETWORK**

The Encinitas Union School District Network is part of the networks that make up the Internet. Each school in the District is connected to the District Network and Internet in its library/Media Center and other locations such as student workstations, teacher workstations, computer labs and clustered computers in pods. The District Network makes sharing information and communications with the other schools and the district office possible. The network supports activities which have educational value for students and educators.

The district uses network filtering/blocking technologies to ensure that minors are not exposed to inappropriate materials including, but not limited to, visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors. Since filtering/blocking systems are not 100% successful, it is the employee's responsibility to visually monitor student use of the Internet and electronic resources in the classroom or other public access locations. The employee shall instruct students to report instances to a responsible adult when inappropriate materials have been accessed through the district's information network. Employees shall report to the school principal or immediate supervisor instances in which students have reported that the filtering/blocking systems have failed in order that the technicians can take appropriate action.

#### **IV. Internet...It's a Party Line**

The Internet and District Network are "public places." It is important to remember that this space is shared with many other users. Potentially millions of individuals at the same time may be interacting across the network. An individual's actions can be monitored by others on the network. If a particular service on the network is used, chances are good that someone knows the connection is being made, knows about the computer shareware borrowed and knows what has been looked at while in the system. Because these connections are granted as part of the larger scope of the curriculum, the EUSD reserves the right to monitor all traffic on the network. We do this in order to ensure the security, performance, and integrity of resources made available to all users.

#### **V. Acceptable Use Policy**

The school has a behavior code for all students that details appropriate school behavior, outlines rights and sets expectations for students. Because EUSD's Enterprise Network is used as part of school activities, the school's code of conduct applies to network activities as well. Therefore, the Acceptable Procedures for Use of the Internet is an extension of the school's behavior code. These rules apply to vandalism of computer equipment or software, unauthorized access to information, computer piracy, hacking and any tampering with hardware or software.

These rules also apply to the electronic use of harassing and abusive or obscene language. The network may not be used to annoy or harass people. Other types of damage and information loss to computer systems are viruses and worms. If anyone is responsible for a computer becoming infected with viruses or worms, they will be held liable.

#### **VI. Moral & Ethical Issues**

The EUSD wants to provide the student(s) with a stimulating educational environment but, at the same time, wants to protect students from obtaining or using inappropriate material/information. We acknowledge the fact that inappropriate materials/information exist and will do everything we can to actively avoid them. We cannot weed out all inappropriate materials that are accessible by students, but it should be clearly understood by all students that access to such material, in any form, is forbidden. Although the actual percentage of unacceptable material is small, it can be a cause for concern for students and parents if a student stumbles upon the information while doing legitimate research. If the student has a question or concern regarding any information he/she finds, he/she should contact a teacher or administrator immediately.

## **VII. Parental Guidelines**

The network is designed to achieve and support instructional goals. As a parent, it is important to set standards and ground rules from the beginning because, as wonderful as on-line services are, they can be misused. There is a need for parents, as in all activities for children, to provide continuous supervision. Although most children mean well, they also like to imitate the way a few others are acting on-line and this may not be the way parents want their children to act.

Discuss expectations with children and require them to follow guidelines. Parents' standards should include the: how's, when's, who's, where's, what's, and costs.

### **How:**

Provide directions for connecting and disconnecting the on-line services.

Demonstrate the ways children are expected to interact. Stress the importance of good netiquette and positive communication. Children should know the expectations for the quality of:

- 1) What is posted on-line for everyone to see
- 2) E-mail sent
- 3) Participation in live discussions/chats

As in all areas of life, not everyone on-line has the same values and expectations. Children should be aware that others may flame (write or post unkind, or more severe, words about something posted or sent), act rudely during the on-line chats, or engage in other impolite behaviors, and that you will not tolerate this type of behavior from your children.

### **When:**

This section applies to Internet access at home. Discuss when to connect. If a service that charges is used, peak hours can be expensive. Establish hours that are appropriate for children. There are no student-oriented discussions on-line late at night, therefore, late-night connections are not appropriate. Set limits for children on the amount of time which can be spent in on-line activities. This makes more efficient use of time on-line and maintains a balance of activities in their lives.

### **Where:**

Talk with children about places they may go on-line. Although areas for children depend on their age, on-line experience, knowledge, interests and ability, it must be made clear that certain areas are off-limits.

### **What: (When using purchased on-line services such as America Online)**

Let children know that the use of telecommunications service is a privilege offered to them, not a right. Check the service to see if there are rules regarding children. If so, review the rules and reinforce that they are expected to follow these rules.

Know children's passwords and on-line ID/names. Ethical dilemmas dealing with privacy versus safety may arise. Make sure to explain, before a problem arises, that privacy cannot be respected under certain circumstances.

Teach children about the difference between freeware and shareware programs. Software labeled freeware is free; shareware is free to download and try out, but a fee must be paid for using it.

Check what children are doing on-line. Sometimes, when children are on-line, it's like when they are in their room doing their homework. Several hours later, the homework still isn't completed. Obviously, the children were concentrating on something else. On-line students can get side-tracked also.

**Who:**

Don't discourage children from interacting with others on-line. That is part of the excitement and learning that makes telecommunications so special. Talk with children about interaction on-line. Don't scare them, but they need to be made aware of which actions by others are acceptable. Encourage children to discuss any problems they may encounter.

With younger children, it may be necessary to tackle the definition of a stranger, as they may not understand the concept. The concept is even more difficult to understand on-line, as just about everyone is a stranger in the usual sense understood by children. Perhaps the best rule to follow is to insist that children not to give out their telephone number, address, or other personal information while on-line.

Make it clear that, unless they have your permission, they are not to send photographs to others on-line and they are not to arrange meetings with people they meet on-line. If anyone asks for pictures or meetings, children should let parents know immediately.

**Cost:**

Talk to your children about on-line expenses. They should understand that the use of on-line services is not free, even if they are accessing the Internet.

Discuss with children the problems connecting with distant bulletin boards via long distance calls. Middle and high school age students may want to connect with every bulletin board all over the world, although there are most likely a number of bulletin boards within the local calling area.

**VIII. On-line Manners Netiquette**

Students are expected to use the network to pursue intellectual activities, seek resources, access libraries and communicate with friends. We want them to explore this "space" and discover what is available there. We want students to learn new things and to share that new-found knowledge with others. When using the computer network and communicating with others in remote or even close locations, keep the following in mind:

- 1) Check letters, email, or writings before sending them or posting them on-line. Sometimes, other people may misunderstand what is meant to be said.
- 2) Post on-line or send via email only items considered to be "in good taste".
- 3) Don't type in all CAPS. Use of all capital letters appears like shouting and seems rude.
- 4) If someone sends you email that is nasty or offensive, don't reply. Forward offensive email to the service and let the service handle it
- 5) Remember, you cannot see the person(s) on the other end, you cannot tell how old they are or even what sex they are. They could tell you anything and you cannot always be sure what they are telling you is the truth. You also should not fabricate stories about yourself. Use common sense.
- 6) It is not wise to give out personal information to those you meet on-line.
- 7) When joining a chat session or live discussion, take time to understand what is being discussed before entering the conversation. Don't just jump in with questions. If there is a topic for the discussion, make sure comments relate to the discussion.
- 8) During live on-line conferences, there are often rules of protocol. Make sure there is a clear understanding for the terms and action during the conferencing.
- 9) Appreciate the volunteers who help with on-line services. Many of the people directing sessions are educators, parents and students who are not paid for the enormous amount of work they do. Volunteer to help.
- 10) Absolute privacy cannot be guaranteed in a network environment. Think carefully about what is said and how it is said. For personal safety and for the safety of others, remember to exercise caution when communicating with people in the outside world. Do not give out home phone numbers or addresses to anyone. They do not need to have that information. If

you feel there is a problem or if you feel uncomfortable with the information given, tell a parent, teacher, computer lab assistant or administrator immediately. By the same token, other users cannot be harassed. There is a risk of breaking the law by bothering other people. If a user on the Network asks that mail no longer be sent, or no further contact made, all contact must stop immediately. The right of freedom of expression is present as is the right to be free from harassment.

## **IX. Legal Issues and Laws**

A. The State of California passed a computer crime bill in December of 1979. The bill added Section 502 to the Penal Code making it a felony to intentionally access any computer system or network for the purpose of:

- devising or executing any scheme or artifice to defraud or extort, or
- obtaining money, property, or services with false or fraudulent intent, representation, or promises.

It is also a felony to maliciously access, alter, delete, damage or destroy any computer system, computer network, computer program or data. Penalties include fines up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment in the county jail for up to one year or in the state prison for up to three years. Anyone committing acts of this kind will face police charges and disciplinary action by the school district. The person will be punished to the full extent of the law.

Some examples of offenses are:

- Removing another user's accounts
- Changing another user's passwords
- Using an unauthorized account number
- Damaging any files
- Altering the system
- Using the system to make money illegally

Damage cannot be caused to any school computer or district property including the network system.

### **B. Plagiarism**

The dictionary defines plagiarism as "taking ideas or writings from another person and offering them as your own." The student who leads others to believe that what they are reading is the student's original work when, in fact, it is not, is guilty of plagiarism. Credit should always be given to the person who created the idea. Be careful when using the Internet. Cutting and pasting ideas into a personal document is very easy to do. Always make certain that credit is given to the original author.

### **C. Copyright**

"Copyright" is another issue altogether. According to the Copyright Act of 1976, if the Internet or other information systems are used, the information that is in the public domain can be freely used. Copyrighted materials on the Internet can be duplicated and used by students for scholarly purposes. A user may not, however, plagiarize or sell what is found.

### **D. Misuses**

The Encinitas Union School District declares unethical and unacceptable behavior just cause for taking disciplinary action, revoking networking privileges, and/or initiating legal action for any activity through which an individual misuses this tool, such as the following:

- Uses the Network for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities. Illegal activities shall be defined as a violation of local, state, and/or federal laws.
- Inappropriate use shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the network, and/or purpose and goals. Obscene activities shall be defined as a violation of generally accepted social standards for use of a public-owned and operated communications vehicle.
- Intentionally disrupt network traffic or crashes the network and connected systems.
- Degrades or disrupts equipment or system performance.
- Uses the Encinitas Union School District computing resources for commercial or financial gain or fraud.
- Steals data, equipment, or intellectual property.
- Gains or seeks to gain unauthorized access to resources or entities.
- Forges electronic mail messages, or uses an account owned by another user.
- Invades the privacy of other individuals.
- Post anonymous messages.
- Saves ANY information to District hard drives.
- Possesses any data which might be considered a violation of these rules in paper, magnetic disk or in any form.

#### E. Consequences of Violations

Consequences of student violations may include:

- Suspension of Internet access, Network privileges, and/or computer access;
- Revocation of Internet access, Network privileges, and/or computer access;
- School suspension;
- School expulsion;
- Legal action and prosecution by authorities

#### F. Remedies and Recourse

If a student is accused of any of the violations previously mentioned, the student has the same rights and privileges as if accused of school vandalism, fighting, etc. The site principal is responsible for the administration of uses and misuses of the Internet. The District has the right to restrict or terminate Network and Internet access at any time and for any reason. The District, further, has the right to monitor Network activity, in any form, in order to maintain the integrity of the Network.

#### X. Conclusion

It is not the purpose of this document to discourage the individuals from using the exciting resources available on the Information Highway through the Internet. The intent of the Encinitas Union School District is to inform parents, students, and educators about the latest resources available for educational enhancement and the areas of concern regarding its use.

We are able to make available to our staff and students vast sources of information. We are able to bring the world's best libraries and universities into our classrooms in "real time". As we make these resources available to students and staff, we must practice caution and care regarding our children. We sincerely hope this document will educate parents, students and teachers in applicable areas. Additionally, we encourage the forwarding of any ideas that could improve/enhance this document to Administrative Services at the district office.