

## **USE OF COMPUTERS BY STAFF AND STUDENTS**

### **General Principles**

The Board of Education of the Rhinebeck Central School District is committed to the optimization of student learning and teaching and therefore encourages the use of computers and networked resources, including the Internet (a global network made up of smaller contributing networks) by its students and staff.

The District encourages computer use as an integral part of the curriculum. Through software applications, on-line databases, internet resources, social media sites, bulletin boards and electronic mail, the network will enhance educational experiences and provide statewide, national, and global communication opportunities for staff and students.

By providing access to technology, the District intends to promote educational excellence and to prepare students for an increasingly technological world. This use should facilitate collaboration, resource sharing, research, innovation and communication.

When a student or staff member accesses computers, computer networks, and educational technology owned or operated by the Rhinebeck Central School District (RCSD), or by the Dutchess County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), he/she assumes certain responsibilities and obligations. All access to information of this type is subject to appropriate RCSD or BOCES policies, and to local, state, federal, and international laws.

RCSD expects that staff and student use of this technology will be ethical and will reflect academic honesty. Staff and students must demonstrate respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, system security mechanisms, and rights to privacy.

All technology services and equipment of the Rhinebeck Central Schools, including all messages transmitted or stored by them, are the sole property of the District.. For this reason, all district technology is to be used primarily for district/education related purposes. Incidental appropriate personal use of district technology must not interfere with the educational mission of the district. The responsibility for appropriate use of the district technology must rest on the user, whether student, staff member or guest. Therefore, the district requires that users act responsibly by reading and following this policy and any implementing regulations. Access to district technology is a revocable privilege, and not a right. Use of district technology is monitored by the district and there is no expectation of privacy.

The District reserves the right to determine the nature of any computer equipment that will be installed as well as the location of said equipment. Staff will have the opportunity, as needed, to provide input, but the final decision rests with the District computer & technology resources department, the District facilities department, and/or administration.

Each staff member or student who wishes to use the various networks available to him/her through District technology must establish a user (ID) account in order to insure the integrity of the network and Internet. Each account holder must agree to act responsibly and to comply with this Policy and the Administrative Regulations promulgated by the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools regarding access to and use of computers and networked information resources.

Therefore, before receiving a user account (ID), each student and staff member must sign a user agreement. In the case of students, the student's parent or guardian must also sign the user agreement. Due to the different roles & responsibilities of each staff member's job, his/her account access may vary.

Under no condition should an account holder give his/her password to another user. All violations of this Policy and Regulations that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of that account. A user account is a privilege that may be suspended or revoked in the event of a breach of this Policy and Regulations by an account user. Further, a breach of this policy and regulations may be considered an act of insubordination which may result in discipline of the account holder.

Users acknowledge that in the course of using the Internet, there may occur interruptions in service beyond the control of BOCES or the RCSD, which may result in the loss of data or files. BOCES and RCSD disclaim any and all responsibility for loss of data, information or files, caused by such service interruptions.

The District makes no guarantees or warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, regarding the quality of the service it is providing. It is not responsible for any losses, damages or other obligations arising from the use of district technology, including:

- loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions, whether caused by the district's negligence, or by a user's errors or omissions;
- the accuracy, nature or quality of information stored on district resources or gathered through district-provided technology access;
- personal property used to access district technology; or

- unauthorized financial obligations resulting school access to district technology.

#### Obligations

Staff and students are expected to make appropriate use of computer resources provided by the RCSD and the BOCES. Users must:

- Use computer resources only for authorized purposes following established procedures.
- Be responsible for all activities on an assigned account.
- Access only files and data that are your own, which are publicly available, or to which you have been given authorized access.
- Use only legal versions of copyrighted software which have been installed by the RCSD computer & technologies resources department.
- Be considerate in the use of shared resources.
- Maintain the privacy of your own password.
- Make no use of the computer for political advocacy, except where such is part of an approved, staff supervised, educational activity related to the curriculum. Such advocacy must contain a disclaimer that any opinions expressed do not represent those of the RCSD or the BOCES.
- Exercise care in the use of e-mail for appropriate purposes. using the highest ethical standards
- Insure that any copyrighted material is not reproduced without the written approval of the owner of the copyright. and/or used per the Fair Use doctrine of US Copyright Law.
- Exercise care not to take ideas or writings from other individuals and offer them as their own (plagiarism).

Staff and students must not make inappropriate use of computer resources provided by the RCSD or the BOCES. The following is a partial list of examples of inappropriate use:

- Using another person's password or revealing one's password to another.
- Using another person's files, system, or data without permission.
- Using computer programs to decode passwords or to access control information, that he/she has not been given authority to do so
- Entering a code-protected or hidden file.
- Attempting to circumvent or subvert system security measures.
- Engaging in any activity that might be harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating viruses, damaging files, or disrupting service.
- Vandalizing hardware or software components.
- Making or using illegal copies of copyrighted software, storing such copies on RCSD or the BOCES systems, or sending them to other networks.
- Using mail service or district resources to harass or cyberbully others.

- Using profane, obscene, defamatory or other kinds of inappropriate language.
- Violating any policies of the Boards of Education of the RCSD or the BOCES Board, or any local state, federal, or international laws.

**Internet Use and Safety**

Internet access is provided with the understanding that the RCSD and the BOCES cannot control the content available on the Internet. The vast majority of sites available provide a wealth of useful information to staff and students. However, some sites may contain information that is inaccurate, offensive, defamatory or otherwise inappropriate for students. The RCSD and BOCES do not condone or permit the use of such materials in the school environment and make good faith efforts to limit access by students to such inappropriate materials.

Users who bring such material into the school environment may have their accounts suspended or terminated, may be subject to disciplinary action, and may be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials where such activities are or are suspected of being illegal.

The District shall also provide age-appropriate instruction to students regarding appropriate online behavior including, but not limited to, interacting on social networks, web sites and chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. Such instruction will be provided even if the District prohibits students from accessing social networking sites and chat rooms on District technology.

The RCSD, in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, requires all District computers with Internet access to be equipped with filtering or blocking technology that blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or are harmful to minors. All newly acquired computers with Internet access will have this filtering or blocking technology installed within ten (10) days of installation of such computers. This shall be documented by the District in accordance with law. The District, however, does not guarantee that students will be prevented from accessing all inappropriate locations.

Parents, staff members, and students must be aware that it is the responsibility of the user to monitor his/her own access and to use sound judgement. However, the RCSD and BOCES, through their staff members, technology and systems reviews, shall monitor online activities of students while in school, including but not limited to use of e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication, "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors and access to materials harmful to minors.

Any user who receives harassing, threatening, or unwelcome communications should immediately bring them to the attention of the teacher, the building principal, or the superintendent, as appropriate.

**Privacy**

Users acknowledge that the network administrator may periodically need to review on-line activities in the course of performing routine maintenance of the system. Users further acknowledge that if there is reasonable suspicion of a user having violated this policy or any other RCSD or BOCES Policy or Regulation, or any applicable law, the network administrator and/or appropriate school official may require access to his/her files, including private correspondence including all emails and private files, to review on-line activities. Any administrator reviewing such files in accordance with this Policy shall not be subject to any claims arising out of such review.

The District network administrators may review the system at any time to ensure that it is working properly and in compliance with federal and state law, including but not limited to the Dignity for All Students Act, this policy and regulations, and the district Code of Conduct.

The RCSD and BOCES prohibit the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors by their officers, employees or agents.

The District reserves the right to delete any files as deemed necessary to maintain the integrity and efficient operation of network servers.

Access will be provided only to authorized users who agree to comply with this policy and regulations at the sole discretion of the district. Authorized users will be personally responsible for maintaining the integrity of district technology. The district prohibits the disclosure of usernames, passwords, account information, or any other unique identifiers to any third party.

**Due Process and Sanctions**

The Rhinebeck Central School District considers any violation of this policy to be a serious offense. Any account user who after due process has been afforded, is determined to have used district computers, networked information resources and/or the Internet in violation of this Policy, may have his/her use account suspended and/or revoked. A breach of the terms of this Policy and any implementing Regulations may also result in disciplinary action consistent with

applicable laws and regulations, the Student Code of Conduct, and applicable collective bargaining agreements. A breach of the terms of this Policy shall result in a referral to appropriate law enforcement officials where the breach involves suspected illegal or criminal activities.

Any statement accessible on district technology is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of the district. Accordingly, anonymity is not allowed.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish regulations to implement this policy.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** 9/25/01, 7/24/12, 4/17/18

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** 10/9/01, 8/14/12, 5/8/18

**Adopted.**

RHINEBECK

Grade of Student



**Rhinebeck Central School District**  
*Computers & Technology Resources*  
*Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)*

As a student of the Rhinebeck Central School District (RCSD) I have read or it has been explained to me the attached RCSD AUP Policy. I understand the Policy and agree to abide by it.

Name (printed):

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Signature:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardian Name (printed)

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Signature:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return just this signature page only and retain the Policy for your reference.

RHS students – return signature page to the main office  
BMS students – return signature page to your computer technology teacher.  
CLS students – return signature page to the main office