

Town School – Responsible Use Policy

Town School provides our students and staff access to a multitude of technology resources. We believe that these resources provide incredible opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community beyond our campus. The advantages of having access to these resources are far greater than any potential downside. However, with the privilege of access comes great responsibility for students, teachers, staff and families. Town expects all community members to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources. Our policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of networked information & communication tools.

Expectations

Responsible use of Town’s technology resources is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of the school’s mission. Each computer user has the responsibility to respect and protect every other person in our community and on the internet. Some activities are expressly prohibited by law. Other activities are inappropriate, as defined by the administration of the school. The following policies are intended to clarify expectations for conduct, but they should not be construed as all-inclusive. Violating any portion of this signed agreement may result in disciplinary review, including possible suspension or dismissal from Town, and/or legal action. Town will cooperate with law enforcement officers in investigations related to illegal activities conducted through our network. The school reserves the right to apply disciplinary consequences for computer-related activities conducted off-campus if such activity adversely affects the safety or well-being of students or other members of our community, or constitutes behavior embarrassing to the school.

Limitation of Liability

Town School takes precautions to restrict access to objectionable material online, but it is not possible to have full control over access to resources and materials on the internet. Town School reserves the right to block content that negatively impacts the academic performance of students. Town School cannot guarantee that network services will be without error. The school will not be responsible for any lost data or interrupted service caused by malfunction, negligence, or omission. Town School is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the network. Town School will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of the network.

Laptops (Grades 5-8)

Students are expected to have their laptops at school in good working order, with the battery fully charged, every day. Laptops should be carried in and therefore protected by their case, treated gently, and must not be left unattended or exposed to the weather. The 4-year extended warranty does not cover theft or loss -- parents should decide whether additional insurance is necessary to cover this possibility. In the event of theft or loss, families will be expected to purchase a replacement laptop through the Technology Department. Students are permitted to customize laptops to their own working style (e.g. background screens and other system enhancements) as long as these are appropriate to a school environment. Students are permitted to install software on their laptops so long as it is legally owned, with the exception of any software known to cause system problems, file-sharing software, and games with mature ratings. We strongly suggest that students minimize external installations because, if they cause system errors, it will necessitate that the laptop be re-imaged. All software installed by Town School must remain on the laptop at all times, and attempts to disable or bypass installed software or settings are a violation of this policy.

Use of School Technology Resources

- I will not play games, instant-message, or access music or videos at school, unless it is part of the curriculum and is authorized by a teacher.
- I will be careful and aware when printing to avoid wasting resources and printing unnecessary items. I will request permission from a teacher before printing information from the internet.
- I will not change default settings, install downloads or alter public computers in any way (public computers are found in the lab, library and lower school classrooms.)
- I am responsible for maintaining and backing up all of my own files and data. (Save files to the Briefcase and Update to the server.)
- I will use Town School email and network space only for school-related activities.
- I will not use my Town School email account to send out mass unsolicited messages or to forward chain letters, joke collections, internet urban legends, and other objectionable materials.
- I will not use Town School technology resources for commercial activity or to seek monetary gain.
- I will not deliberately perform any act which will negatively impact the operation of anyone's computers, printers or networks. I will make an effort to keep my computer free from viruses and other destructive materials. If my computer is accidentally infected, I will seek help from the Technology Department.
- I will not store or transfer software used primarily for hacking, eavesdropping, or network administration.

Online Behavior

- I continuously represent Town School whenever and wherever I use online communications. This includes, but is not limited to email, chat, instant-messaging, texting, social networking sites, blogs, podcasts, etc. In all of my online communication with classmates and teachers I will be respectful and polite.
- I will not post information online about members of the Town School community without their permission.
- If I am uncertain whether a specific computer activity is permitted or appropriate, I will ask a teacher or parent before engaging in that activity.

Internet Safety

- Despite Town School's best efforts of supervision and the use of a content filtering device, users may encounter inappropriate material online. All members of our community must take responsibility for their use of the internet and avoid these sites to the best of their ability.
- Users should not reveal any personal information online (last name, home address, phone number, email address, etc.) and never arrange a face-to-face meeting with anyone you have come in contact with online unless given permission by a parent.
- We believe it is imperative that parents work in partnership with Town School to ensure that students are safe, and acting and communicating in an appropriate manner online.
- Internet safety is an imperative part of our Media Literacy curriculum and it is discussed with students each year prior to any internet use on campus.
- An officer from the Oakland Police Department is scheduled each year to speak with our boys about internet safety.

Privacy

- I will not share my network password with anyone, or use anyone else's network password. If I become aware of another individual's password, I will inform that person or a member of the Technology Department.
- I will be ethical and respect the privacy of others throughout the Town School network and internet, and will not share or access others' folders, files, or data without authorization.

- I understand that Town School has the right to look at any data, email, logs, or files that exist on the network or on individual computers without the prior consent of system users. In addition, Town School reserves the right to view and potentially remove harmful files or applications on the network or on individual computers without prior notice to users.
- I will not share or post online personally identifying information about any members of the Town School community without permission (addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, photos, videos, etc.)
- I will not make audio or video recordings of another student or teacher without their prior permission.

Inappropriate or Obscene Materials

- I will not search for or download any material that is offensive unless it is specifically necessary for a class assignment and I have specific permission from a teacher. (Offensive material is defined as material that is lewd or pornographic, pro-violence, hateful, discriminatory, or anti-social.)
- If I mistakenly access inappropriate information, I will notify a teacher or staff person immediately.

Copyright & Plagiarism

- I will properly cite any resources that I use in my work.
- I will not plagiarize from any sources. (Plagiarism is taking someone else's writing, images, or idea and presenting it as your own.)
- Except for "educational fair use" as defined by a teacher, I will not copy, save, or redistribute copyrighted material (files, music, software, etc.) Users should assume material is copyrighted unless it is stated clearly to the contrary.

Acceptance of Agreement

Student:

I have read all of this Responsible Use Policy and agree to follow all of the rules and expectations contained in it. I understand that any violation of these rules is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. If I violate any of these rules, I understand that I will be subject to school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action. I understand that I am responsible for taking care of my computer and backing up my files.

Name (print): _____

Grade and Homeroom: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian:

I have read this Responsible Use Policy and give permission for my child to use Town School technology resources in accordance with it. I will instruct my child regarding the importance of following all guidelines included in this agreement.

I recognize the school cannot guarantee that network services will be without error. I will not hold the school responsible for any data loss or interrupted service caused by malfunction, negligence, error, or omission. I release Town School, and its personnel, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the network.

I recognize the school cannot guarantee restricted access to inaccurate or controversial materials online. I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the network. I recognize the school cannot guarantee appropriate use of the internet. I will not hold the school responsible for financial obligations arising from the unauthorized purchase of any products or services.

I also understand that my child's photo and/or work, (writing, drawings, etc.), may occasionally be published on the Internet and may be accessible on a World Wide Web server unless I specify otherwise.

5th – 8th grade parents: I accept responsibility for supervision when my child's laptop use is not in a school setting. I understand that the laptop warranty does not cover theft or loss. I understand that there may be fees or costs (not covered by warranty) incurred from multiple incidents of misuse or abuse of the laptop by my child, but that I will be apprised of any costs before repair work is performed.

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____