



TAFT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent of Schools

"OUR FOCUS IS CHILDREN"

Acceptable Use Policy

Aligned with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) of 2000 and Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act

The Taft ISD has made Internet access available to the staff and students of the District and believes the Internet offers a multitude of valuable resources and ways of enhancing the educational experience.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting millions of computers all over the world to billions of individual subscribers who have access to electronic mail communication with one another. Further, the Internet provides users with information and news from research institutions, colleges and libraries, including discussion groups on a wide variety of topics. With access to computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to have educational value in the context of the school environment. Although Taft ISD uses filters to restrict access and protect its students and staff from harmful material, it is impossible to restrict all harmful materials. Ultimately, the responsibility to avoid harmful material rests with the user, who must adhere to the District's strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so that users are aware of the responsibilities they acquire when accessing the District's network. In general, the responsibilities include efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the District's network resources.

It is important that you read all Taft ISD policies, and ask questions if you need help in understanding them. If you violate any of these provisions, your network access account may be terminated, and future access denied. Acceptance of this Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP") is construed at time of receipt, unless a denial of services form is signed and on file with the District.

Definition of Harmful Material

Material that is harmful to students and minors means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to students and minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for students and minor, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to students and minors.
47 U.S.C. 254(h)(7)(G); 20 U.S.C. 6777(e)(6).

District Level

The District's system shall only be used for administrative and educational purposes that are consistent with the District's mission and goals. Commercial, income-generating, or "for profit" use of the District's system is strictly prohibited. Limited personal use of the system shall be permitted if the use:

1. Imposes no tangible cost to the District;
2. Does not unduly burden or increase the security risk of the District's computer network or resources; and
3. Has no adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance.

Filtering

Taft Independent School District utilizes District-wide content filter software that is used to maintain appropriate technology boundaries, and to filter internet sites that are considered inappropriate or harmful to minors. All Internet access on District property shall be filtered by the District. Requests to access a site that has been blocked by mistake may be reviewed by campus administrators, who maintain the discretion to allow or deny any such request for access. Any changes made to the District's filtering software to allow the requested access shall be made to the requested site only, and no other changes shall be made to the categories of sites being blocked.

System Access

Access to the District's technology resources, including electronic communication devices and computers, is a **privilege**—not a right. Access may be made available to students and employees primarily for instructional purposes, and in accordance with this AUP, District policy, and state and federal guidelines. Access shall be given to all employees as a privilege via a standard user account. This standard user account allows for internet access and access to District resources. If any program must be installed to further educational or instructional purposes, the installation must be completed through the appropriate technology personnel. If additional software is necessary for classroom instruction, staff shall contact the technology department at least one (1) day prior to the day the software is necessary for instruction, in order for the software to be installed and prepared by the day of instruction.

User Responsibility

The following standards apply to **all** users of the District's communications systems and network resources:

1. Revealing your personal information or the personal information of others is prohibited.
2. Be polite. Swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language is prohibited.
3. Users shall not use the computer to harass others with language, images, or threats.
4. Users shall not deliberately access or create any harmful material, as described above.
5. The individual in whose name a system account is registered and/or used is responsible for use of the system account at all times, and shall not allow others to use their login information (except for authorized staff members).
6. Users may not install any program or software unless approved through the technology department.
7. Users shall not intentionally damage the District's account system or network resources through physical abuse or software manipulation.

Failure to comply with any of the above standards may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, or termination.

Report Violations

The District plays an active role in monitoring all activities that take place on the Taft ISD Network. Daily monitoring of internet usage is taking place, and violations shall be reported to appropriate campus personnel within 48 hours of its detection. All District personnel shall report any known violation of this Acceptable Use Policy. Students must report known violations to their supervising teacher, or a technology department employee. Employees and students must report requests for personally identifying information, or similar conduct from unknown individuals, as well as communication that is or related to:

- Abusive
- Obscene
- Online Gambling
- Sexually-Oriented Material
- Threatening/Harassing
- Damaging to another person's reputation
- Promoting Violence
- Illegal

- Harmful Material

Educational Materials

Educational materials regarding the proper use of District technology resources shall be provided for employees and students, with an emphasis on safe and ethical use of technology and awareness of the District's AUP. This information helps to promote an environment of safety pertaining to electronic communication, including: internet use, technical interaction, appropriate online behavior, awareness of cyber-bullying, and responding to cyber-bullying. Each campus shall provide training on appropriate online behavior, and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Termination/Revocation of System User Account

The District may suspend or revoke user access to the District's system based on violation(s) of this AUP, District policy, and/or administrative regulations regarding acceptable use. A student or employee who knowingly introduces prohibited materials into the District's electronic environment shall be subject to suspension and/or other disciplinary actions in accordance with District policies and this AUP.

Disclaimer

System users and parents of students with access to the District's system should be aware that use of the District's system may accidentally or unknowingly provide access to other electronic communication systems in the global network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material, including harmful material.

The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including without limitation those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, with respect to any services provided by the system and/or any information or software contained therein. The District does not warrant that the functions or services performed by or that information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected.

Opinions, advice, services and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District. The District shall cooperate fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communications system.

*** Please Note - Acceptance of this AUP is renewed and accepted every year automatically, unless a denial of internet access form is completed and on file with the District.**