

Reviewed: 07/15/2024

524 INTERNET, TECHNOLOGY, AND CELL PHONE ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the Crosslake Community School's (CCS) computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding student and employee access to CCS's computer system and the Internet, including electronic communications, CCS considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to CCS's computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. CCS expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of CCS's computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use. CCS is required to provide this guidance and instruction in order to receive funding from the Federal Erate program.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

CCS is providing students and employees with access to CCS's computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the Internet. CCS's system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the CCS's system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of CCS and their policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of CCS's system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of CCS's system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate CCS's policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

- A. While not an exhaustive list, these uses of CCS's technology system and Internet resources or accounts are considered **unacceptable**:
1. Users will not use CCS's system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit or distribute:
 - a. pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
 - b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful,

- or sexually explicit language;
 - c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
 - d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;
 - e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
 - f. social networking sites such as Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Reddit and similar websites or applications.
2. Users will not use CCS's system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 3. Users will not use CCS's system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
 4. Users will not use CCS's system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change CCS's system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate CCS's security system, and will not use CCS's system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
 5. Users will not use CCS's system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
 6. Users will not use CCS's system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, CCS's addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.

[Note: School districts should consider the impact of this paragraph on present practices and procedures, including, but not limited to, practices pertaining to employee communications, school or classroom websites, and student/employee use of social networking websites.]

- a. This paragraph does not prohibit the posting of employee contact information on school district webpages or communications between employees and other individuals when such communications are made for education-related purposes (i.e., communications with parents or other staff members related to students).
- b. Employees creating or posting school-related webpages may include personal contact information about themselves on a webpage. However, employees may not post personal contact information or other personally identifiable information about students unless:
 - (1) such information is classified by the school district as directory information and verification is made that the school district has not received notice from a parent/guardian or eligible student that such information is not to be designated as directory information in accordance with Policy 515; or

- (2) such information is not classified by the school district as directory information but written consent for release of the information to be posted has been obtained from a parent/guardian or eligible student in accordance with Policy 515.

In addition, prior to posting any personal contact or personally identifiable information on a school-related webpage, employees shall obtain written approval of the content of the postings from the building administrator.

- c. These prohibitions specifically prohibit a user from utilizing the school district system to post personal information about a user or another individual on social networks, including, but not limited to, social networks such as "Facebook," "X (formerly known as Twitter)," "Instagram," "Snapchat," "TikTok," "Reddit," and similar websites or applications.
7. Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated CCS official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to CCS's system or any other system through CCS's system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user. Messages and records on CCS's system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate CCS authorities.
 8. Users will not use CCS's system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any CCS computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
 9. Users will not use CCS's system for conducting business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of CCS. Users will not use CCS's system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use CCS's system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate CCS's official.
 10. Users will not use the CCS's system to engage in bullying or cyberbullying in violation of the CCS's Policy 514 Bullying Prohibition Policy. This prohibition includes using any technology or other electronic communication off school premises to the extent that student learning or CCS's environment is substantially and materially disrupted.
- B. CCS has a special interest in regulating off-campus speech that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others. A student or employee engaging in any of the foregoing unacceptable uses of the Internet when off CCS's premises and without the use of CCS's system also may be in violation of this policy as well as other CCS's policies. Examples of such violations may include, but are not limited to, serious or severe bullying or harassment targeting particular individuals, threats aimed at teachers or other students, failure to follow rules concerning lessons, the writing of papers, the use of computers, or participation in other online school activities, and breaches of school security devices. If CCS receives a report of an unacceptable use originating from a non-CCS computer or resource, CCS may investigate such reports to the best of its ability. In situations when CCS's receives a report of an unacceptable use originating from a non-CCS computer or resource, CCS shall investigate such reports. Students or employees may be subject to disciplinary action for such conduct including, but not limited to, suspension or cancellation of the use or access to CCS's computer system and the Internet and discipline under other appropriate CCS's policies,

including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, or termination of employment.

- C. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate CCS official. In the case of a CCS's employee, the immediate disclosure shall be to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the building administrator. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. In certain rare instances, a user also may access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher or, in the case of a CCS's employee, the building administrator.

VI. FILTER

[Note: Pursuant to state law, school districts are required to restrict access to inappropriate materials on school computers with Internet access. CCS seeking technology pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 125B.26 or certain federal funding, such as e-rate discounts, for purposes of Internet access and connection services and/or receive funds to purchase Internet accessible computers are subject to the federal Children's Internet Protection Act, effective in 2001. Those districts are required to comply with additional standards in restricting possible access to inappropriate materials. Therefore, school districts should select one of the following alternative sections depending upon whether the school district is seeking such funding and the type of funding sought.]

[NOTE: The 2025 Minnesota legislature amended Minnesota Statutes 125B.15 as follows: "A school district receiving technology revenue under section 125B.26 must prohibit, including through use of available software filtering technology or other effective methods, adult access to material that under federal or state law is reasonably believed to be obscene or child pornography."]

[Note: School districts that receive certain federal funding, such as e-rate discounts, for purposes of Internet access and connection services and/or receive funds to purchase Internet accessible computers are subject to the federal Children's Internet Protection Act, effective in 2001. This law requires school districts to adopt an Internet safety policy that contains the provisions set forth below. Also, the Act requires such school districts to provide reasonable notice and hold at least one public hearing or meeting to address the proposed Internet safety policy prior to its implementation. School districts that do not seek such federal financial assistance need not adopt the alternative language set forth below nor meet the requirements with respect to a public meeting to review the policy. The following alternative language for school districts that seek such federal financial assistance satisfies both state and federal law requirements.]

- A. With respect to any of its computers with Internet access, the school district will monitor the online activities of both minors and adults and employ technology protection measures during any use of such computers by minors and adults. The technology protection measures utilized will block or filter Internet access to any visual depictions that are:
1. Obscene;
 2. Child pornography; or
 3. Harmful to minors.
- B. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or
 2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for

minors, 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 minors.

- C. Software filtering technology shall be narrowly tailored and shall not discriminate based on viewpoint.
- D. An administrator, supervisor, or other person authorized by the Superintendent may disable the technology protection measure, during use by an adult, to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- E. The school district will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

VII. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER CCS POLICIES

Use of CCS's computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with CCS's policies and the mission of CCS.

VIII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

- A. By authorizing use of CCS's system, CCS does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on CCS's system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of CCS's system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another CCS policy, or the law.
- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if CCS authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or CCS's policy.
- D. Parents/guardians may have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their student's files and e-mail files in accordance with CCS's Protection of Pupil Records Policy. Parents/guardians have the right to request the termination of their student's individual account at any time.
- E. CCS's employees should be aware that CCS retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and email files. In addition, CCS's employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on CCS's system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minnesota Statutes, Ch. 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- F. CCS will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with CCS's policies conducted through CCS's system.

IX. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents/guardians and employees of CCS.
- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the CCS's designated professional staff before a student may use a CCS account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet Use Agreement form for students must be read and signed by the student and the parent/guardian and returned to the office. The Internet Use Agreement form for employees must be signed by the employee and returned to the office.

X. LIMITATION ON CCS's LIABILITY

Use of CCS's system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. CCS will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on CCS's tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or misdeliveries or nondeliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. CCS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on CCS's system. CCS will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of CCS's system or the Internet.

XI. USER NOTIFICATION

- A. All users shall be notified of CCS's policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
 - 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with CCS's policies.
 - 2. Disclaimers limiting CCS's liability relative to:
 - a. Information stored on CCS's hard drives or servers.
 - b. Information retrieved through CCS's computers, networks or online resources.
 - c. Personal property used to access CCS's computers, networks or online resources.
 - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of CCS's resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 - 3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of CCS's sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
 - 4. Notification that, even though CCS may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.
 - 5. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the student and/or the student's parents/guardians.
 - 6. Notification that the collection, creation, reception, maintenance and dissemination of data via the Internet, including electronic communications, is governed by Policy 406, Public and Private Personnel Data and Policy and Policy 515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.
 - 7. Notification that, should the user violate CCS's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, CCS's disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
 - 8. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

XII. PARENTS'/GUARDIANS' RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

- A. Outside of CCS, parents/guardians bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media. Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring their student's use of CCS's system and of the Internet if the student is accessing CCS's system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents/guardians will be notified that their students will be using CCS's resources/accounts to access the Internet and that CCS will provide parents/guardians the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access.

This notification should include:

 - 1. A copy of Form 524 Internet Use Agreement provided to the student user.
 - 2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities. (See Paragraph A above.)
 - 3. A notification that the parents/guardians have the option to request alternative educational activities not requiring Internet access and the material to exercise this option.
 - 4. A statement that the Policy 524 Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the student and the parent/guardian and returned to the office prior to use by the student.
 - 5. A statement that CCS's policy 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy is available for parent/guardian review.

XIII. NOTIFICATION REGARDING TECHNOLOGY PROVIDERS

- A. "Technology provider" means a person who:
 - 1. contracts with the school district, as part of a one-to-one program or otherwise, to provide a school-issued device for student use; and
 - 2. creates, receives, or maintains educational data pursuant or incidental to a contract with the school district.
- B. "Parent" means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian.
- C. Within 30 days of the start of each school year, the school district must give parents and students direct and timely notice, by United States mail, e-mail, or other direct form of communication, of any curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider contract affecting a student's educational data. The notice must:
 - 1. identify each curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider with access to educational data;
 - 2. identify the educational data affected by the curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider contract; and
 - 3. include information about the contract inspection and provide contact information for a school department to which a parent or student may direct questions or concerns regarding any program or activity that allows a curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider to access a student's educational data.
- D. The school district must provide parents and students an opportunity to inspect a complete copy of any contract with a technology provider.
- E. A contract between a technology provider and the school district must include requirements to ensure appropriate security safeguards for educational data. The contract must require that:
 - 1. the technology provider's employees or contractors have access to educational data only if authorized; and
 - 2. the technology provider's employees or contractors may be authorized to access educational data only if access is necessary to fulfill the official duties of the employee or contractor.
- F. All educational data created, received, maintained, or disseminated by a technology provider pursuant or incidental to a contract with a public educational agency or institution are not the technology provider's property.

XIV. SCHOOL-ISSUED DEVICES

- A. "School-issued device" means hardware or software that the school district, acting independently or with a technology provider, provides to an individual student for that student's dedicated personal use. A school-issued device includes a device issued through a one-to-one program.
- B. Except as provided in paragraph C, the school district or a technology provider must not electronically access or monitor:
 - 1. any location-tracking feature of a school-issued device;
 - 2. any audio or visual receiving, transmitting, or recording feature of a school-issued device; or
 - 3. student interactions with a school-issued device, including but not limited to keystrokes and web-browsing activity.
- C. The school district or a technology provider may only engage in activities prohibited by paragraph B if:
 - 1. the activity is limited to a noncommercial educational purpose for instruction, technical support, or exam-proctoring by school district employees, student teachers, staff contracted by the school district, a vendor, or the Minnesota Department of Education, and notice is provided in advance;

2. the activity is permitted under a judicial warrant;
 3. the school district is notified or becomes aware that the device is missing or stolen;
 4. the activity is necessary to respond to an imminent threat to life or safety and the access is limited to that purpose;
 5. the activity is necessary to comply with federal or state law, including but not limited to Minnesota Statutes section 121A.031; or
 6. the activity is necessary to participate in federal or state funding programs, including but not limited to the E-Rate program.
- D. If the school district or a technology provider interacts with a school-issued device as provided in paragraph C, clause 4, it must, within 72 hours of the access, notify the student to whom the school-issued device was issued or that student's parent and provide a written description of the interaction, including which features of the device were accessed and a description of the threat. This notice is not required at any time when the notice itself would pose an imminent threat to life or safety, but must instead be given within 72 hours after that imminent threat has ceased.

XV. CELL PHONE USE

The school board directs the executive director and school administration to establish rules and procedures regarding student possession and use of cell phones in schools. These rules and procedures should seek to minimize the impact of cell phones on student behavior, mental health, and academic attainment. These rules and procedures may be designed for specific school buildings, grade levels, or similar criteria.

[NOTE: In 2024, the Minnesota legislature enacted a law requiring that schools adopt a policy on students' possession and use of cell phones in school by March 15, 2025. This law does not state that schools must incorporate specific language or provisions in the school policy.

MSBA recognizes the common practice of setting forth cell phone rules in a student handbook or similar document. This Article directs school administration to establish cell phone rules, which the school board may require be presented to the board for approval. This approach enables administrators to craft flexible and specific rules that are specific to grade levels and buildings. The school board may choose to set forth general principles regarding cell phone use in this Article.

Under the new law, the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association and the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals will collaborate to make best practices available to schools on a range of different strategies to achieve the goals stated above.]

XVI. LIMIT ON SCREEN TIME FOR CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN

A child in a publicly funded preschool or kindergarten program may not use an individual-use screen, such as a tablet, smartphone, or other digital media, without engagement from a teacher or other students. This section does not apply to a child for whom the school has an individualized family service plan, an individualized education program, or a 504 plan in effect.

XVII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A. CCS's administration may develop appropriate user notification forms, guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the Board of Education (BOE) for approval. Upon approval by the BOE, such guidelines, forms and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The administration shall revise the user notifications, including student and parent/guardian notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. CCS's Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents/ guardians, staff and

members of the community.

- D. Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the BOE shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)
Minn. Stat. § 13.32 (Educational Data)
15 U.S.C. § 6501 *et seq.* (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.166 (Limit on Screen Time for Children in Preschool and Kindergarten)
17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.* (Copyrights)
20 U.S.C. § 1232g (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
47 U.S.C. § 254 (Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA))
47 C.F.R. § 54.520 (FCC rules implementing CIPA)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.73 (School Cell Phone Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)
Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)
Mahanoy Area Sch. Dist. v. B.L., 594 U.S. 180, 141 S. Ct. 2038 (2021)
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, (1969)
United States v. Amer. Library Assoc., 539 U.S. 194, (2003)
Sagehorn v. Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 728, 122 F.Supp.2d 842 (D. Minn. 2015)
R.S. v. Minnewaska Area Sch. Dist. No. 2149, 894 F.Supp.2d 1128 (D. Minn. 2012)
Tatro v. Univ. of Minnesota, 800 N.W.2d 811 (Minn. App. 2011), *aff'd* on other grounds 816 N.W.2d 509 (Minn. 2012)
S.J.W. v. Lee's Summit R-7 Sch. Dist., 696 F.3d 771 (8th Cir. 2012)
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc. v. Camdenton R-III Sch. Dist., 853 F.Supp.2d 888 (W.D. Mo. 2012)
M.T. v. Cent. York Sch. Dist., 937 A.2d 538 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2007)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 519 (Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Grievance Procedures and Process)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 603 (Curriculum Development)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 806 (Crisis Management Policy)

Policy 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy is also found in the Staff Handbook.

Policy 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy is also found in the Online Student and Family Handbook.

Policy 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy is also found in the Seat-Based Student and Family Handbook.