

Computer, Network, and Internet Use Faculty Policy

I. Overview

a. Purpose

The intent of this regulation is to provide employees with general requirements for utilizing Buffalo Valley Public School District computers, networks and Internet services. The regulation may be supplemented by more specific administrative procedures and rules governing day-to-day management and operation of the computer system.

These rules provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses for illustrative purposes but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Employees who have questions regarding whether a particular activity or use is acceptable should seek further guidance from their site administrator/supervisor.

Failure to comply with the Board policy and/or other established regulation governing computer use may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Illegal uses of computers may also result in referral to law enforcement authorities. The employee shall be responsible for any losses, costs or damages incurred by Buffalo Valley Public School District related to his/her violations of Policy and/or these rules.

b. Those Affected

All employee users of the Buffalo Valley Public Schools Network and Computer Systems

II. Acceptable and Prohibited Use

a. Acceptable Use

Employee access to Buffalo Valley Public School District computers, networks and Internet services is provided for administrative, educational, communication and research purposes consistent with educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals. General rules and expectations for professional behavior and communication apply to use of Buffalo Valley Public School District computers, networks and Internet services.

The level of access that employees have to school unit computers, networks and Internet services is based upon specific employee job requirements and needs. Employees are to utilize District computers, networks and Internet services for school-related purposes and performance of job duties. Incidental personal use of school computers is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, with system operations or other system users. "Incidental personal use" is defined as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications. Employees are reminded that such personal use must comply with this policy and all other applicable policies, procedures and rules.

III. Confidentiality of Information

Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.

Prohibited Use

The employee is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school unit computers, networks and Internet services and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. General examples of unacceptable uses, which are expressly prohibited, include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any use that is illegal or in violation of other Board policies, including harassing, discriminatory or threatening communications and behavior, violating of copyright laws, etc.;
2. Any use that passes confidential or personal information about another individual or group;
3. Any use in which one individual portrays him/herself as another individual for any purpose.
4. Any use involving materials that are obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive;
5. Any inappropriate communications with students or minors;
6. Any use that prompts or promotes the buy, selling, or participation in illegal use of any controlled or illegal substances;
7. Any use that prompts or promotes participation in gang activity or violence, whether gang related or not, against another individual or group for any reason;
8. Any use that prompts or promotes the buy, selling, or possession of illegal weapons or participation in terrorist activities or organizations;
9. Any use for private financial gain, or commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes;
10. Any use as a forum for communicating by e-mail or any other medium with other users or outside parties to solicit, proselytize, advocate or communicate the views of an individual or non-school-sponsored organization; to solicit membership in or support of any non-educational-related organization, whether for-profit or not-for-profit.
11. No employee shall knowingly provide school e-mail addresses to outside parties whose intent is to communicate with school employees, students, and/or their families for non-school purposes. Employees who are uncertain as to whether particular activities are acceptable should seek further guidance from the building principal or their appropriate administrator;
12. Any communication that represents personal views as those of Buffalo Valley Public School District or that could be misinterpreted as such;
13. Downloading or loading non-educational software or applications without permission from the system administrator;

14. Opening or forwarding any e-mail attachments (executable files) from unknown sources and/or that may contain viruses;
15. Sending mass e-mails to school users or outside parties for school or non-school purposes without the permission of the system administrator or building principal;
16. Any malicious use or disruption of computer, networks and Internet services or breach of security features;
17. Any misuse or damage to computer equipment;
18. Misuse of the computer passwords or accounts (employee or other user);
19. Any communications that are in violation of generally accepted rules of network etiquette and/or professional conduct;
20. Any attempt to access unauthorized sites;
21. Failing to report a known breach of computer security to the system administrator;
22. Using school computers, networks, and Internet services after such access had been denied or revoked;
23. Any attempt to delete, erase or otherwise conceal any information stored on a computer that violates these rules;
24. Using the District web pages to provide personal information or provide access to personal pages on site servers, district servers, other servers, or online services;
25. Any violation of Buffalo Valley Public Schools' Web Site Use and Development policy.

IV. Netiquette

All employees must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

- a. Be polite. Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.
- b. Avoid language and uses that may be offensive to other users. Don't use access to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material that is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
- c. Don't assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when it is known that the individual would have no objection.
- d. Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format that the recipient can open.

V. "Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities

It is a violation of this Policy to use the District's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

VI. No Expectation of Privacy

Buffalo Valley Public School District retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by the District. Buffalo Valley Public School District reserves the right to monitor inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage by employees and other system users. All files saved to or stored on the computer systems are considered the property of the District and shall be scrutinized as such. Employees have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of school computers, including e-mail messages, web pages and stored files.

VII. Staff Responsible to Students

Teachers, staff members and volunteers who utilize school computers for instructional purposes with students have the responsibility to monitor and supervise such use. Teachers, staff members and volunteers are expected to be familiar with Buffalo Valley Public School District policies and rules concerning student computer and Internet use and to enforce them. When, in the course of their duties, employees/volunteers become aware of student violations, they are expected to stop the activity and inform the building principal (or other appropriate administrator).

VIII. Warranties/Indemnification

Buffalo Valley Public School District assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by employees including but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

The District makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any employee arising out of the employee's use of its computer networks or the Internet under this policy.

Upon using the network and Internet systems, the employee is taking full responsibility for his or her use. The employee is also agreeing to indemnify and holds the School, the District, all of their administrators, staff, and co-workers exempt from any and all losses, costs, claims or damages resulting from the employee's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services.

The employee agrees to cooperate with the District in the event of the District's initiating an investigation of an employee's use of his or her access to its computer network and the Internet, whether that use is on a school computer or on another computer outside the District's network.