

# Teaching Students Right from Wrong in the Digital Age

**Doug Johnson**

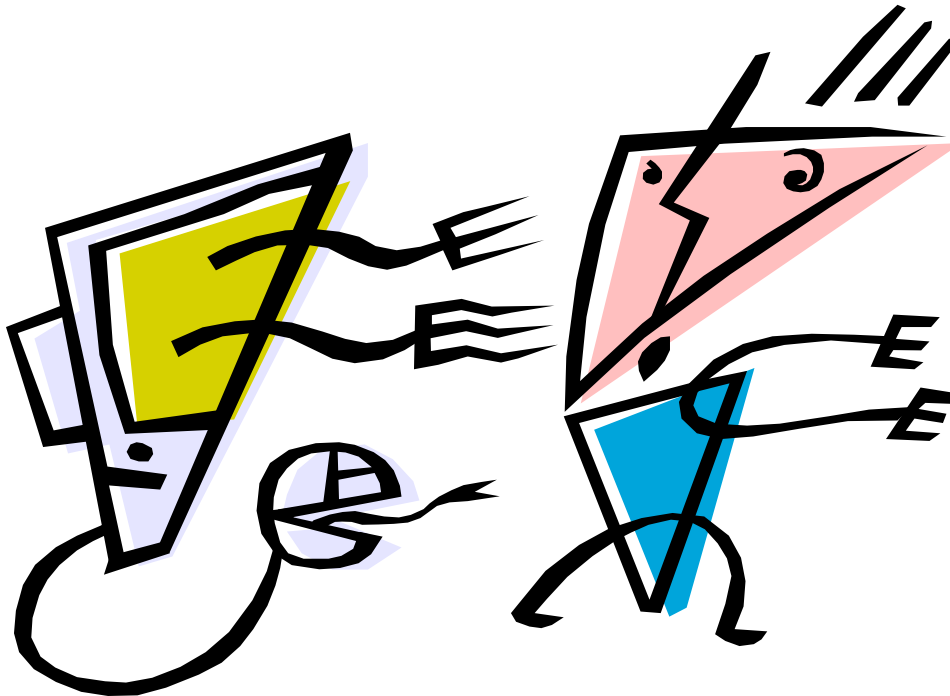
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**Teaching Students Right from Wrong in the Digital Age: A Technology Ethics Primer** (workshop synopsis)  
Studies show that misconceptions abound about the appropriate use of technologies. This presentation examines basic ethical issues, some ethical codes, actual case studies when students have had to make ethical decisions, and techniques teachers can use to promote ethical behaviors in the classroom.



## **Ethical Issues Surrounding Technology Use in Schools**

**Abstract:** Computer ethics, better called information technology ethics, is an important but under-taught subject in our schools. New technologies bring about the need to interpret old values in new ways, but also may call for the creation of new codes of conduct when new actions are made possible with the use of technology.

Several ethical codes dealing with technology use exist and many schools have adopted Acceptable Use Policies that include rules for the proper use of information technologies. Teachers, students, and parents need to know and understand these codes.

For children, the major issues surrounding technology ethics can be categorized into three areas: privacy, property, and appropriate use. School related cases can be found in each of these areas.

Teachers need to develop learning objectives and activities that specifically address technology ethics. Proper use needs to be taught at the same time that other computer skills are taught. Students' understanding of ethical concepts need to be assessed. Technology use privileges, especially those involving on-line use, should not be given to students until the assessments show that a student knows and can apply ethical standards and school policies.

### **Two worlds**

Even very young children can quickly identify whether the behaviors in these examples are right or wrong:

*A boy finds a magazine with sexually explicit photographs and brings it to school. He shows its contents to others in his class who become upset.*

*A student steals a set of keys and uses them to gain access to the school office where she changes her grades and views the grades of other students.*

*A student locates a story, recopies it in his own writing, and submits it to the teacher as his own work.*

*A student steals a book from a local store. She says the only reason she stole it was that she did not have the money to purchase it.*

When students start using technology, especially information technologies that consist of computers and computer networks, they start operating in a new world: a virtual world. Suddenly behaviors may not be as easily judged to be right or wrong. What would your students' responses be when given these situations:

*A girl downloads a sexually explicit picture from a site on the Internet on a computer in the school library. Her classmates can easily view the computer screen.*

*A student finds the teacher's password to the school's information system and uses it to change his grades and view the grades of other students.*

*A student uses the copy and paste command to place large parts of an electronic encyclopedia article into an assigned paper. She turns the paper in as her own work.*

*A student makes a copy of software program borrowed from another student to use on his computer at home.*

### **What's different about "computer ethics?"**

Computer ethics, better labeled "information technology ethics," deal with the proper use of a wide range of telecommunication and data storage devices. Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with moral judgements, issues of right and wrong, and determining what behaviors are humane and inhumane. Most (Western?) codes of ethical behavior describe actions as "ethical" that do one or more of the following:

- promote the general health of society
- maintain or increase individual rights and freedoms
- protect individuals from harm
- treat all human beings as having an inherent value and accord those beings respect
- uphold religious, social, cultural, and government laws and mores

A simplistic way of saying this is that an "ethical action" then, is one that does not have a damaging impact on oneself, other individuals, or on society.

In direct or indirect ways, children begin to learn ethical values from birth. And while families and the church are assigned the primary responsibility for a child's ethical education, schools have traditionally had the societal charge to teach and reinforce some moral

values, especially those directly related to citizenship and school behaviors. Most of the ethical issues that surround technology deal with societal and school behaviors and are an appropriate and necessary part of the school curriculum.

Why do technology ethics then deserve special attention? There are a variety of reasons. Using technology to communicate and operate in a "virtual world," one that only exists within computers and computer networks, is a new phenomenon that is not always well understood by many adults who received their primary education prior to its existence. Both fear and romance usually accompany new technologies. Our mass media has produced movies like *War Games*, *The Net*, and *Mission Impossible* that capitalize on the unfamiliarity many adults have of communications technologies. Movies, as well as book and television programs, often make questionably ethical actions such as breaking into secure computer systems seem heroic or at least sympathetic.

Our new technological capabilities also may require new ethical considerations.

- The ability to send unsolicited commercial messages to millions of Internet email users (spamming) was not possible before there was email or the Internet. Does the fact that the financial burden of unsolicited advertisements now fall on the recipient rather than the sender create the need for new rules?
- Digital photography has made the manipulation of images undetectable, an impossible feat with chemical photography. What obligations do communicators have to present an undoctored photograph, even if its message may not be as powerful as one that has been digitally "enhanced?"
- Prior to the Internet, minors faced physical barriers of access to sexually explicit materials. What safeguards do schools, libraries, and parents need to take to keep children from freely accessing inappropriate materials? Which will better serve our children in the long run - software filtering devices or instruction and practice in making good judgements?
- Intellectual property in digital format can now be duplicated with incredible ease. Do we need clearer definitions of property? Can an item that is taken without authorization, but leaves the original in place, still be considered stolen?

One of the most significant reasons that computer ethics deserve special attention is because of our rather human ability to view one's actions in the intangible, virtual world of information technologies as being less serious than one's actions in the real world. Most of us, adults or children, would never contemplate walking into a computer store and shoplifting a computer program. Yet software piracy (the illegal duplication of computer programs) costs the computer business billions of dollars each year. Most of us would never pick a lock, but guessing passwords to gain access to unauthorized information is a common activity.

Information technology misuse by many people, especially the young, is viewed as a low-risk, game-like challenge. Electronic fingerprints, footsteps, and other evidence of digital impropriety have historically been less detectable than physical evidence. There is a physical risk when breaking into a real office that does not exist when hacking into a computer database from one's living room or den. Illegally copying a book is costly and time consuming; illegally copying a computer program can be done in seconds at very small expense. The viewed pornography on a website seems to disappear as soon as the browser window is closed.

Not long ago, ethical technology questions were only of interest to a very few specialists. But as the use of information technologies spreads throughout society and its importance to our national economies and individual careers grows, everyone will need to make good ethical decisions when using computers. Studies show that persons involved in computer crimes acquire both their interest and skills at an early age.

### **Ethical codes**

Many organizations and individuals have written lists of ethical standards for technology use. One of the mostly widely used and easily understood sets of computer use principals comes from the Computer Ethics Institute.

The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics by the Computer Ethics Institute

1. Thou shalt not use a computer to harm other people.
2. Thou shalt not interfere with other people's computer work.
3. Thou shalt not snoop around in other people's computer files.
4. Thou shalt not use a computer to steal.
5. Thou shalt not use a computer to bear false witness.
6. Thou shalt not copy or use proprietary software for which you have not paid.
7. Thou shalt not use other people's computer resources without authorization or proper compensation.
8. Thou shalt not appropriate other people's intellectual output.
9. Thou shalt think about the social consequences of the program you are writing or the system you are designing.
10. Thou shalt always use a computer in ways that insure consideration and respect for your fellow humans.

Association for Computing Machinery's *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* (1993) stresses many of the same ideas as *The 10 Commandments of Computer Ethics*. Their "moral imperatives" include:

1. I will contribute to society and human well-being
2. I will avoid harm to others.
3. I will be honest and trustworthy.
4. I will be fair and not discriminate.
5. I will honor property rights including copyrights and patents.
6. I will give proper credit for intellectual property.
7. I will respect the privacy of others.
8. I will honor confidentiality.

Arlene Rinaldi has written a well-respected set of Internet guidelines called "The Net: User Guidelines and Netiquette." This more informal set of expected behaviors helps new users learn the manners and etiquette of an often-impatient online community. In her guide, newbies (inexperienced telecommunications users) learn that:

- typing in all capital letters is considered shouting and therefore rude
- sending chain letters via email is improper and a waste of resources
- humor and sarcasm are easily viewed as criticism and should be used with care in electronic communications

Rindaldi isolates proper conduct for a variety of areas of telecommunication use including telnet, FTP, e-mail, discussion groups, and the World Wide Web.

Most schools now have adopted an "Acceptable Use Policy" that governs the use of the Internet and other information technologies and networks in a school. The rules in these policies often apply to both staff and students. Everyone in the school, as well as parents, needs to know and understand these policies. The Mankato School's Acceptable Use Policy (adopted from the Minnesota School Board Association's recommended policy) can be found at: <<http://www.isd77.k12.mn.us/guidelines.html>>. Included in the policy are some explicit rules of use:

*Users are prohibited from using school district Internet resources or accounts for the following purposes:*

1. *To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.*
2. *To transmit or receive obscene, abusive or sexually explicit language.*
3. *To violate any local, state or federal statute.*
4. *To vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization.*
5. *To access another person's materials, information, or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.*
6. *To violate copyright laws, or otherwise 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 school computer.*
7. *Unauthorized commercial use or financial gain.*

*Internet uses shall be consistent with other school district policies. (These are listed.)*

A variety of guides should be made available to staff and students and one should either be adopted or an original set of guidelines written. While an entire school or district may wish to use a single set of guidelines, each classroom teacher needs to understand, teach, and model the guidelines. Simple, easily remembered for children are probably the best:

*Johnson's 3 P's of Technology Ethics:*

1. *Privacy - I will protect my privacy and respect the privacy of others.*
2. *Property - I will protect my property and respect the property of others.*
3. *a(P)propriate Use - I will use technology in constructive ways and in ways which do not break the rules of my family, church, school, or government.*

Educators need to be aware and understand that another, counter set of "ethical" behavior also exists - that espoused by hackers. Being described as a "hacker" once indicated only a strong interest and ability in computer use. Popular use of the word has changed, so that now "hacking" describes gaining unauthorized access to computerized systems and data. The term "cracker" is also used, but is often used to describe a hacker who has a malicious intent. Some common hacker beliefs, stated by Deborah Johnson in *Computer Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Prentice-Hall, 1994) include:

- all information, especially digital information, should be free and available to all people
- breaking into computer systems points out security features to those who are responsible for maintaining them
- hacking is a form of learning about computers and is harmless
- hackers help monitor the abuse of information by the government and business

Teachers need to know and understand these counter-culture beliefs and be able to offer reasons why they need to be questioned for their logic and ethics.

## **Major areas of concern**

The scope of information technology ethics is very broad. For the purposes of this short guide, we will be looking only at some common cases where younger children will need to make ethical choices or have the unethical actions of other effect them. I have categorized the issues under the major headings of privacy, property, and appropriate use. These cases and others like them should be used to foster classroom discussion. Other areas of ethical concern for older children and adults are listed below in the section "Further Objectives/Questions."

### **Privacy - Does my use of the technology violate the privacy of others or am I giving information to others that I should not?**

*John fills out a survey form on a computer game web page. In the following weeks, he receives several advertisements in the mail as well as dozens of email messages about new computer games.*

Children need to understand that businesses and organizations use information to market products. Information given to one organization may well sell it to others. An interesting discussion can revolve around how much a person would like a company to know about him or her. Will a company who knows a lot about me use it to customize products for me or only to manipulate me?

*Adele "meets" Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, in an Internet chat room. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address.*

All individuals need to know that a stranger is a stranger, whether on the playground or on the Internet. The same rules we teach children about physical strangers apply to virtual strangers as well.

*The principal suspects Paul of using his school email account to send offensive messages to other students. He asks the network manager to give him copies of Paul's email.*

Schools (and businesses) have the right to search student and employee files that are created and stored on school owned computer hardware. Ask students if they know the school's search policy on lockers and book bags, and whether the same policy should be extended to computer storage devices.

*Helen is using the word processor on the classroom computer to keep her journal, but Mike keeps looking over her shoulder as she types.*

As one librarian puts it, just because information appears on a computer screen doesn't make it public. Students who are accustomed to the public viewing of television monitors need to realize that student created work on a computer screens should be treated as privately as work created in a paper journal.

*Ms. Eastman, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. Eastman had been working on student progress reports and that her grading program is still open. He checks to see what grade he is getting and finds the grades for several other students.*

Information inadvertently left accessible does not mean that it is appropriate to access it. Ask students: "Is forgetting to lock one's home is the same as allowing anyone to enter it?" While information may be about students (such as grades), that information does not necessarily belong to them. And students certainly do not have the right to look at information about other students. One question that might be raised is: "What right do I as a student have to check the accuracy of the data gathered about me and what would be correct procedure for making that check?"

## **Property issues - Do my actions respect the property of others and am I taking the correct steps to keep my property safe?**

*Jerry borrows Ben's game disks for Monster Truck RallyII and installs them on his home computer. He says he will erase the game if he does not like it, or will buy the game for himself if he likes it.*

Students need to know that computer software is protected by copyright law. It is unlawful, as well as unethical, to make copies of computer programs without permission or payment of the producer of those programs. It also needs to be understood that when purchasing software, one is usually only purchasing the right to use the software. The ownership of the code that comprises the program stays with the producer. This means that one cannot alter the program or resell it. The vast majority of software licenses require that one copy of a program be purchased for each computer on which it is to be run. And no, the inability to pay for software is not a justification for illegal copying anymore than the inability to pay for a book is any justification for shoplifting it from a bookstore.

*Betty downloads a solitaire card game from the Internet that is "shareware." It can be legally used for 30 days and then Betty must either delete it from her computer or send its author a fee. Betty has been using the game for 30 days.*

Software falls into three main types: freeware (that which can be used without payment indefinitely); shareware (that which can be used for a trial period and then must either be erased or purchased); and commercial software (that which must be purchased before use). Understanding the concept of shareware is a good way of helping students understand why purchasing software benefits them. The profits that software producers make are partially used to fund the development of more software. If the profit motive is lost from software creation, less software and fewer improvements are likely to be made.

*Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair project on a CD-ROM reference title. She uses the copy function of the computer to take an entire paragraph from the CD-ROM article and paste it directly into her report. She also forgets write down the title of the article and the CD-ROM from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she does not cite the source in her bibliography.*

Plagiarism is easier than ever, thanks to the computer. Students need to understand when and how to cite sources in both print and electronic formats.

*Albert finds a site on the Internet that is a repository of old term papers. He downloads one on ancient Greece, changes the title, and submits it as his own.*

Academic work is increasingly becoming available for sale or downloading from the Internet. On-line services now offer help in writing "personal" essays requested for college admissions offices. How are such services alike or unlike ghostwritten biographies and speeches of celebrities and politicians?

*Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the data disk on which George has been storing his essays and erases it.*

Does deleting a file or erasing a disk constitute the destruction of property? After all the magnetic medium of the hard drive or the plastic case of the computer disk is left intact. All that has changed is the polarization of some magnetic particles bonded to a circle of plastic. Students need to learn to treat intellectual property, existing only in virtual spaces, the same way they would treat physical property and that the theft or destruction of such property is unethical (and unlawful).

*With her teacher's permission, Lucy uses the classroom computer to download a program from the Internet that has instructions on how to make paper airplanes. After using the program, the classroom computer does not seem to work very well, crashing often and randomly destroying files. Lucy thinks she might have downloaded a virus along with the paper airplane program.*

Students need to know about the unethical practices of others and how protect themselves from those practices. Computer viruses often infecting a computer through downloading software from the Internet, can be detected and destroyed by virus protection programs. Students need to know how to find, install, and use these programs.

*Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has discovered the password to the school's student information system. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to create a "bomb" which will erase all the information on the office computer.*

Citizens (including students) have the ethical responsibility for reporting wrongdoing, including destruction of property. And while there are lots of reasons why students are reluctant to do so, as adults we need to express our beliefs that reporting unethical or criminal behavior serves a social purpose. Younger students often believe that school property is owned by the teachers and administrators, and are surprised to learn that it their parents' taxes or fees that must be used to pay for vandalized or stolen school resources.

**Appropriate use - Does this use of the technology have educational value and is it in keeping with the rules of my family, my church, my school and my government?**

*Jack's class has been using the digital camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can use a computer program to change the photographs. He has used the program so far to make himself look like the tallest boy in the class, to blacken out the front tooth of a girl he doesn't like, and to give his teacher slightly crossed eyes.*

While this example may seem frivolous or even like "good fun," journalistic integrity is a serious issue which even young writers and photographers need to be aware of. Deliberate distortion of events whether through words or pictures may harm both those involved in the event as well as the reputation of the reporter.

*Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice tells the other people on her electronic mailing list that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. Others on the list have begun emailing her health-related questions.*

Disguise, impersonation, and other forms of "trying on" new personalities are common childhood and adolescent behaviors. The anonymity of the Internet limits such impersonation only to the degree that a lack of a student's writing skills or sophistication of thought allows discovery. Role-playing in a physical context is often seen as both healthy and educational. We need to help students ask when such activities are productive and when they might be harmful.

*Penelope has found a Web site that has "gross jokes" on it. She prints the pages out and shares them with her friends.*

A good deal of Internet content, if not obscene, is certainly tasteless, offensive, and lacking in educational value. Schools should define and teachers should help students understand the qualities and conditions under which an item becomes inappropriate for school use. Students need to understand the concepts of pornography, racism, and sexism. Students may be exposed to information produced by hate groups and political extremists. Such experiences may be springboards to meaningful discussions about propaganda and free speech issues.

*Chang sends an email message to his sister who attends a school across town. In this email he uses profanities and racial slurs.*

Most schools have harassment policies. Students need to understand that such behavior is wrong regardless of its medium.

*The computers in the library always seem to be busy. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but actually uses the computer to access the latest soccer scores posted on the Internet.*

Most schools allow students to use free time in school to complete personal tasks -to read a book or magazine for enjoyment, to write a letter to a friend, or to draw for pleasure. Technology, too, should be available for student to use to pursue individual interests - to play a game, to send personal email, or to search for Internet information of personal value. The ethical issue here becomes that of an allocation of resources. For most schools, the demand for technology has outpaced its acquisition. Computers and Internet access are usually in short supply, and priority needs to be given to students who have an academic task to complete.

*Just for fun, Nellie sets the print command on her computer to print 50 copies of an electronic encyclopedia article she's been reading, and then walks away.*

Deliberate waste of school materials is not uncommon, and students again need to understand that it is wrong to waste finite resources. As with the vandalism questions, students need to understand that everyone is effected by such activities.

**What students need to understand.**

It is quite obvious that students need to understand and apply both school rules and local and national laws that apply to information technology use, especially those related to privacy, property and appropriateness as described above. They need to know the consequences, both immediate and in the long term for society, if they choose to act against school rules or their country's laws.

Students also need to know that the ability of officials to catch individuals breaking these rules and codes of conduct is growing. Network security systems are becoming more sophisticated in tracking who uses what resource at what time. Students need to realize that most web browsers keep a viewable log of recently visited sites, that most email includes a return address, and that some schools are using programs that record all the keystrokes a student makes during a computer session. All of us need to understand that organizations have the right to search file server space and read the email of students (and staff), especially if there is probable cause. Electronic fingerprints, virtual footprints, and broken digital locks are growing more visible each day.

Students need to understand both their rights and responsibilities related to information technology use. In your school is Internet access a right or a privilege? As the Internet becomes a more indispensable source of information and learning activities, it may

become viewed as an integral part of one's right to an education. We have an obligation to teach students that they have a right to due process if charged a violation of rules or laws. Our Acceptable Use Policies need to articulate what that due process entails. Pragmatically, students need to know how to protect themselves and their data from strangers, hackers, computer viruses, and unauthorized use.

### **What activities teach ethical behaviors?**

*Business Ethics* magazine suggests that businesses take a proactive approach to ethical issues. That advice is also good for schools and classrooms: Teachers must:

- *Articulate values.* Clearly display lists and create handouts of conduct codes.
- *Reinforce ethical behaviors and react to non-ethical behaviors.* Technology use behaviors should be treated no differently than other behaviors - good or bad - and the consequences of student behaviors should be the same. It is important not to over react incidences of technological misuse either.
- *Model ethical behaviors.* Students learn more from what we do than what we say. All rules of ethical conduct we expect from our students, we must display. Verbalization of how we personally make decisions is a very powerful teaching tool.
- *Create technology environments that help students avoid temptations.* Computer screens that are easily monitored (no pun intended), passwords not written down or left easily found, and the habit of logging out of secure network systems all help remove the opportunities for technology misuse in a classroom.
- *Encourage discussion of ethical issues.* "Cases," whether from news sources or from actual school events, can provide superb discussion starters and should be used when students are actually learning computer skills. Students need practice in creating meaningful analogies between the virtual world and the physical world. How is reading another person's email without their permission like and unlike reading their physical mail?
- *Stress the consideration of principles rather than relying on a detailed set of rules.* Although sometimes more difficult to enforce in a consistent manner, a set of a few guidelines rather than lengthy set of specific rules is more beneficial to students in the long run. By applying guidelines rather than following rules, students engage in higher level thinking processes and learn behaviors that will continue into their next classroom, their homes, and their adult lives.

Additionally, students' understandings of ethic concepts need to be assessed. Technology use privileges should not be given to students until they have demonstrated that they know and can apply ethical standards and school policies. Testing of appropriate use needs to be done especially prior to student gaining on-line privileges such as email accounts or Internet access. The teacher should keep evidence of testing on file in case there is a question of whether there has been instruction on appropriate use.

Schools also have an obligation to educate parents about ethical technology use. Through school newsletters, talks at parent organization meetings, and through school orientation programs, the school staff needs to inform and enlist the aid of parents in teaching and enforcing good technology practices.

Finally, ethical instruction needs to be on going. A single lesson, a single unit, or a single curriculum strand will not suffice. All teachers, librarians, and staff members must integrate ethical instruction into every activity that uses technology.



## Resources:

ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct  
<<http://www.acm.org/constitution/code.html>>

Alden, S. "Responsible Computing Myths." <<http://www.computerlearning.org/ARTICLES/respmyth.htm>>

Boschmann, E. The Electronic Classroom: A Handbook for Education in the Electronic Environment. *Learned Information, Inc.* 1995.

Brown, J. "Technology and Ethics." *Learning and Leading with Technology*. March, 1997

Carpenter, C. "Online Ethics: What's a Teacher to Do?" *Learning and Leading with Technology*. March, 1996

**Computer Ethics (an interactive guide)** <<http://library.thinkquest.org/26658/>> (*Up-to-date and fun. Part of the larger "ThinkQuest" site.*)

Computer Ethics Institute <[http://www.brook.edu/its/cei/cei\\_hp.htm](http://www.brook.edu/its/cei/cei_hp.htm)>

**Computer Learning Foundation** <<http://www.computerlearning.org/>> (*Premier website for responsible use of technology by young people. Several articles on this bibliography come from here. Also sells a responsible use curriculum called Chip & Friends.*)

Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility <<http://www.cpsr.org/home.html>>

Head, S. "Big Brother in a Black Box." *Civilization*. August-September, 1999.

Houston, P. "The Trouble With Ethics." *Sourcebook*. Spring, 1991.

**Johnson, D. *Computer Ethics 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Prentice-Hall, 1994.** (*This is an exceptional work. Comprehensive and very readable.*)

McEwan, J. "Computer Ethics." *National Institute of Justice Reports*. January-February, 1991.

Marsh, M. "Pornography, Plagiarism, Propaganda, Privacy: Teaching Children to Be Responsible Users of Technology Protects Their Rights and the Rights of Others." <<http://www.computerlearning.org/Articles/Ethics98.htm>>

Meltzer, B. "Digital Photography -- a Question of Ethics." *Learning and Leading with Technology*. December-January, 1995-96

Rinaldi, A. *The Net: User Guidelines and Netiquette* <<http://www.fau.edu/netiquette/net/>>

*SAFEKIDS.COM* <<http://www.safekids.com>>

**Sivin, J and Bialo, E. *Ethical Use of Information Technologies in Education: Important Issues for America's Schools.* U.S. Department of Justice, 1992.** (*Also excellent. A seminal work.*)

Strategies for Teaching Children Responsible Use of Technology. <<http://www.computerlearning.org/ARTICLES/ethictch.htm>>

Tavani Bibliography of Computing, Ethics, and Social Responsibility  
<<http://www.siu.edu/departments/coba/mgmt/iswnet/isethics/biblio/>>

Valenza, Joyce Kasman "Teaching Ethics in a World of Electronics. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 18, 1999.  
<<http://crossings.phillynews.com/archive/k12.htm>>

Yahoo: Computers and Internet: Ethics <[http://www.yahoo.com/Computers\\_and\\_Internet/Ethics/](http://www.yahoo.com/Computers_and_Internet/Ethics/)>

## Ethics Questionnaire I

- 1) Adele meets Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, in an Internet chat room. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address. Adele likes Frank and gives him the information he asked for. Is what Adele did:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 2) The principal suspects Paul of using his school email account to send offensive messages to other students. He asks the network manager to give him copies of Paul's email. What the principal has done is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 3) Helen is using the word processor on the classroom computer to keep her journal, but Mike keeps looking over her shoulder as she types. What Mike is doing is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 4) Ms. Eastman, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. Eastman had been working on student progress reports and that her grading program is still open on her computer. He checks to see what grade he is getting and finds the grades for several other students. What Terry did is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 5) Jerry borrows Ben's game disks for *Monster Truck Rally II* and installs them on his home computer. He says he will erase the game if he does not like it, or will buy the game for himself if he likes it. Jerry has been using the game now for over a month and has not erased it from his computer and has not bought his own copy. Is Jerry's use of the game:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 6) Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair project on a CD-ROM reference title. She uses the copy function of the computer to take an entire paragraph from the CD-ROM article and paste it directly into her report. She writes down the title of the article and the CD-ROM from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she tells the source in her bibliography. Are Cindy's actions:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 7) Albert finds a site on the Internet that is a collection of old term papers for students to read and use. He downloads one on ancient Greece, changes the title, and submits it as his own. How Albert completed the assignment is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 8) Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the data disk on which George has been storing his essays and erases it. Fahad's actions are:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 9) Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has discovered the password to the school's student information system. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to create a "bomb" which will erase all the information on the office computer. Henry tells his dad about Hank's plan. Are Henry's actions:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 10) Jack's class has been using the digital camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can use a computer program to change the photographs. He has used the program so far to make himself look like the tallest boy in the class, to blacken out the front tooth of his best buddy who will think it is funny, and to give his teacher slightly crossed eyes. Jack's actions are:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know

- 11)** Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice tells the other people on her electronic mailing list that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. Others on the list have begun emailing her health-related questions, but she hasn't answered them. Are Alice's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 12)** As a joke, Chang sends an email message to his sister who attends a school across town. In this email he uses profanities and racial slurs. Are Chang's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 13)** The computers in the library always seem to be busy. There is a rule that computers are used first by those with school work. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but he also uses the computer to access the latest soccer scores posted on the Internet. Is Otis's behavior:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 14)** Just for fun, Nellie sets the print command on her computer to print 50 copies of an electronic encyclopedia article she's been reading, and then walks away. Are Nellie's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 15)** Clark downloads a page with sexually explicit photographs from the Internet to a computer in the classroom. He shows its contents to others in his class. Are Clark's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know

Permission is freely given for teachers to use this material with students as long as credit to the source is given. I welcome comments about your student's responses.

Doug Johnson  
Mankato Public Schools  
Johnsd9@mail.mankato.msus.edu

## Ethics Questionnaire II

- 1) Adele meets Frank, who shares her interest in figure skating, at the shopping center. After several conversations in the following weeks, Frank asks Adele for her home telephone number and address. Adele likes Frank and gives him the information he asked for. Is what Adele did:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 2) The principal suspects Paul of writing offensive notes to other students. He asks the custodian for a key to Paul's locker so he can read through his notebooks. What the principal has done is
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 3) Helen is writing in her journal, but Mike keeps looking over her shoulder as she writes. What Mike is doing is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 4) Ms. Eastman, Terry's teacher, needs to leave the room to take care of an emergency. While she is gone, Terry finds that Ms. Eastman left her grade book open on her desk. He checks to see what grade he is getting and looks at the grades for several other students. What Terry did is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 5) Jerry borrows Ben's comic book *Monster Truck Rally II* and photocopies it. He says he will throw the copy away after he's read it or will buy the comic for himself if he likes it. Jerry has had the comic now for over a month and has not thrown it away and has not bought his own copy. Is Jerry's use of the comic:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 6) Cindy finds some good information about plant growth nutrients for her science fair in an encyclopedia. She copies an entire paragraph from the encyclopedia article directly into her report. She writes down the title of the article and the encyclopedia from which it was taken. When she writes her report, she mentions the source in her bibliography. Are Cindy's actions:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 7) Albert tells his older brother he had to write a report on ancient Greece. His brother trades him a report that he wrote two years ago for the same class for a t-shirt. Albert recopies the report, changes the title, and submits it as his own. How Albert completed the assignment is:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 8) Fahad is upset with his friend George. He finds the notebook in which George has been writing his essays and tears out all the pages with writing. Fahad's actions are:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 9) Henry's older friend Hank, a high school student, has found a key to the school's office. Because Hank feels a teacher has unfairly given him a poor grade, he plans to sneak in at night and destroy all the student records. Henry tells his dad about Hank's plan. By reporting Hank, is Henry:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know
- 10) Jack's class has been using the camera to take pictures for the school year book. Jack has found that he can change the photographs if he draws on them carefully. He has blackened-out the front tooth of his best friend who thinks it is funny and gives his teacher slightly crossed eyes. Jack's actions are:
  - a) Right
  - b) Wrong
  - c) Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d) I don't know

- 11)** Just for fun, thirteen year old Alice (who looks old for her age) tells other people on the city bus that she is twenty years old and a nursing student. Some people on the bus have begun asking her health-related questions, but she doesn't answer them. Are Alice's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 12)** As a joke, Chang mails a letter to his sister who attends a school across town. In this letter he uses profanities and racial slurs. Are Chang's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 13)** The tables in the library always seem to be full. The library's rules state that people who need to use the library for research have first priority. Otis tells the librarian he is working on a research project, but later he looks at the newspaper to find the latest soccer scores. Is Otis's behavior:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 14)** Just for fun, Nellie clogs the bathroom sink with paper towels, turns on the water, and then walks away. Are Nellie's actions:
- a)** Right
  - b)** Wrong
  - c)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - d)** I don't know
- 15)** Clark finds a magazine with sexually explicit photographs and brings it to school. He shows its contents to others in his class who become upset. Are Clark's actions:
- e)** Right
  - f)** Wrong
  - g)** Sometimes right and sometimes wrong depending on the situation
  - h)** I don't know

Permission is freely given for teachers to use this material with students as long as credit to the source is given. I welcome comments about your student's responses.

Doug Johnson  
Mankato Public Schools  
Johnsd9@mail.mankato.msus.edu

**524 - INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY,  
Mankato (MN) Area Public Schools, ISD77**

Adopted: February 18, 1997 District 77 Policy 524

Revised: May 5, 1997, February 17, 1998

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district computer system and acceptable use of the Internet.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

In making decisions regarding student access to the school district computer system and to the Internet, the school district 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 the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

**III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

The school district is providing students and employees with access to the school district's computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is not merely to provide students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school 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 the school district 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 the school district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use of access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

**V. UNACCEPTABLE USES**

- A. The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:
1. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.
  2. Users will not use the school district system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language.
  3. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting or disruptive to the educational process and will not post information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption.
  4. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
  5. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post 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.
  6. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
  7. Users will not use the school district 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 the school district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school district system's security, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
  8. Users will not use the school district 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.
  9. Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.

10. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school district system or any other system through the school district 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.
  11. Users will not use the school district 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 school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
  12. Users will not use the school district system for the conduct of a business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district. Users will not use the school district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official.
- B. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. A user may also in certain rare instances 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.

## **VI. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

- A. Use of the school district computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school district policies and the mission of the school district.

## **VII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

- A. By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district 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 the school district system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law.
- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.
- D. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
- E. School district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- F. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities and activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.

## **VIII. 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 and employees of the school district.
- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet Use Agreement form must be read and signed by the user and the parent or guardian. The form must then be filed at the school office.

## **IX. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY**

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, 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. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or the Internet.

## **X. USER NOTIFICATION**

- A. All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
  1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
  2. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
    - a. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
    - b. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks or online resources.
    - c. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks or online resources.
    - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.

3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
4. Notification that, even though the school district 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 or the student's parents.
6. Notification that should the user violate the school district's acceptable use policy, the student's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
7. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

#### **XI. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE**

- A. Outside of school, parents 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 are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:
  1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
  2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
  3. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and a supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
  4. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

#### **XII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW**

- A. The school district administration may develop appropriate guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The administration shall revise the student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. The school district'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 school board shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

*Legal References: 17 U.S.C. \_ 101 et. seq. (Copyrights)*

#### **Cross References:**

- District 77 Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)
- District 77 Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
- District 77 Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
- District 77 Policy 519 (Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies)
- District 77 Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)
- District 77 Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)
- District 77 Policy 603 (Curriculum Development)
- District 77 Policy 604 (Instructional Curriculum)
- District 77 Policy 606 (Textbooks and Instructional Material)
- District 77 Policy 804 (Bomb Threats)
- District 77 Policy 904 (Distribution of Materials on School District Property by Nonschool Persons)



## **INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

### **STUDENT**

I have read and do understand the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by them. I further understand that any violation of the policies above is unethical and may constitute a violation of law. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print):

User Signature:

Date:

### **PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the school district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school district or its employees or agents responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print):

Parent or Guardian's Signature:

### **SUPERVISING TEACHER**

(Must be signed if applicant is a student)

I have read the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet and agree to promote these policies with the student. Because the student may use the Internet on the school district computer system for individual work or in the context of another class, I cannot be held responsible for the student use of the Internet on network. As the supervising teacher I do agree to instruct the student on acceptable use of the Internet and network and proper network etiquette.

Teacher's Name (please print):

Teacher's Signature:

## **Mankato School District 77 World Wide Web Page Creation Guidelines**

<http://www.isd77.k12.mn.us/webguide.html>

May 1996

The availability of Internet access in all Mankato Public schools provides an educational opportunity for students and staff to contribute to the Mankato School District's "Web Pages" on the World Wide Web.

The creation of a web page provides a means of two-way communication for the purposes of sharing information with the Mankato School District and the world about school curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, and other information relating to our schools and our mission; and providing instructional resources for staff and students.

Publishing privileges are provided to students and staff through individuals who have been authorized by the District Media Services. Creators of web pages need to familiarize themselves with - and practice - the following guidelines and responsibilities, or pages may not be published.

### **Content Standards**

Subject Matter -- All subject matter on Mankato School District Web pages and their links must relate to curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, or information about the Mankato School District or its mission. Staff or student work may be published

only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity. Neither students, staff, nor other individuals may use the district's web pages to provide access to their personal pages on other servers or online services.

**Quality** -- All work must be free of any spelling or grammatical errors. Documents may not contain objectionable material or point directly to objectionable material (i.e., material that does not meet the standards for instructional resources specified in other related district guidelines). The judgment of the teachers, building media specialist and, ultimately, the District Media Supervisor will prevail.

**Student Safeguards** -- While district policies and related statutes pertaining to "directory information" may allow the release of some personal data about students, we have chosen to establish the following guidelines:

- ◆ Documents shall include only the first name of the student.
- ◆ Documents shall not include a student's home phone number or address or the names of other family members or friends.
- ◆ Published e-mail addresses shall be restricted to those of staff members.
- ◆ Decisions on publishing student pictures (digitized or video) and audio clips are based on the supervising teacher's judgment and signed permission of the student and parent or guardian.
- ◆ No student work shall be published without permission of the student and parent or guardian.

### **Policies**

The following additional policies apply to electronic transmission:

- ◆ No unlawful copies of copyrighted material may be produced or transmitted via the district's equipment, including its web server.
- ◆ All communications via the district web pages must have no offensive content. This includes religious, racial, and sexual harassment, violence, and profanity.
- ◆ Any deliberate tampering with or misuse of district network services or equipment will be considered vandalism and will be handled as such.

### **Technical Standards**

District person responsible: District Media Supervisor

In the interest of maintaining a consistent identity, professional appearance, and ease of use and maintenance, the following technical standards are established for all Mankato School District 77 web pages. Each web page added to the district web site must contain certain common elements:

- ◆ At the bottom of the page, there must be the date of the last update of the page and the name or initials of the person(s) responsible for the page or the update.
- ◆ At the bottom of the page, there must be a link that returns the user to appropriate points in the district pages. This would normally be a return to the district home page.
- ◆ Standard formatting is used; Browser friendly HTML editors or word processor programs that save files as HTML files may be used.
- ◆ Care should be used in creating extensive files with tiled backgrounds, large graphics, or unusual or dark color combinations.
- ◆ The authorized teacher who is publishing a final web page will edit, test the document for accurate links, and ensure that the page meets the content standards listed above. In addition, the teacher will assume responsibility for updating the links as needed.
- ◆ Pages may not contain links to other pages that are not yet completed. If further pages are anticipated but not yet developed, the text that will provide the link should be included but may not be made "hot" until the further page is actually in place.
- ◆ All graphics should be in GIF format, currently. Other formats, including sound or video, may be used only in special circumstances and after consultation with the District Media Supervisor.

Directory structure will be determined by the District Media Supervisor and the building person(s) responsible for coordinating the school's web pages. Staff members approved for access will be given access passwords by the District Media Supervisor.

### **Revision of Guidelines:**

These guidelines will be evaluated and updated as needed in response to the changing nature of technology and its applications in the Mankato School District. Questions regarding this information may be directed to: Doug Johnson at [djohns1@mail.isd77.k12.mn.us](mailto:djohns1@mail.isd77.k12.mn.us)