

Multnomah Education Service District

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Reviewed:

Acceptable Use of Electronic Network Services for Authorized Users (Staff, Board and Parents)

Background

The Internet can be a valuable research and learning tool in schools and offices. It is a global system of interconnected computers. Many people and organizations use the Internet. It offers resources similar to books, magazines, newspapers, and videos.

Teachers can use the Internet resources to provide students with new and exciting learning opportunities. Staff can use it to locate information they need for their projects (such as vendors, product lists, pricing, health information, etc.) As they prepare students for the 21st century, schools must provide access to the tools they will use as adults. The Internet is one of those tools. It makes worldwide electronic resources accessible.

Terminology

- Internet:** The Internet is a worldwide collection of computers. They are joined by telephone lines, fiber optic cables, and other electronic technologies.
- MESD Network:** The MESD network consists of interconnected computers and printers that share data. It includes the MESD Ainsworth building and remote sites, alternative schools, single classrooms, and individual users in the MESD service area.
- Network:** A network contains two or more computers that share files and/or printers. **Note:** In these guidelines, “network” refers to both the Internet and the MESD network. When the terms “Internet” and “MESD network” appear separately, they refer to particular collections of computers.
- E-mail:** The term is short for “electronic mail.” It is a system for sending and receiving messages between and among people using networked computers.
- File server:** The file server is the main computer in a network. It provides storage space for sharing files with other computers and can store information about them.
- Print server:** The print server is a computer in a network that receives, manages, and carries out print requests from other computers.

Using the Internet and the MESD Network

The MESD network provides users varying degrees of access to the file server, printers, and e-mail. Staff can store files in increasingly less private areas:

1. On portable disks;
2. On their computer's hard drive;
3. On the file server in an area (folder) of their own;
4. On the file server in a folder they share with others in their department or work group;
5. On the file server in a folder they share with the rest of MESD.

Many software applications are stored on the file server rather than on each individual work-station. Staff can print to a printer within their department or to other printers as appropriate, such as for long print jobs or for color printing. With e-mail, staff can communicate with each other and with others throughout the educational world. This communication can be simple messages or can include files as needed. Messages can go to one person or to a group. The current e-mail system also provides services such as calendaring and scheduling.

MESD will use e-mail as one way of communicating information. All staff with e-mail accounts should check and read messages regularly.

Staff should use the MESD network in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the educational objectives of the MESD. Staff and MESD must work together to develop the network skills and attitudes necessary to:

1. Identify appropriate material;
2. Discriminate between acceptable and unacceptable information;
3. Evaluate the accuracy of information.

MESD technology staff will provide training in using the network properly. This training will include the issues outlined in these guidelines. MESD will continue to support Internet access and e-mail communications. MESD will work to make sure this access is both current and constructive.

The Internet consists of constantly changing, unregulated information. It is impossible to predict the accuracy and appropriateness of material a user may access. Staff may encounter adult content or other objectionable material. Staff will avoid or exit from such sites immediately.

Purpose of the MESD Network

The MESD network's purpose is to enhance school operations and function. It is a resource for improving, extending, and enriching the services supporting teaching and learning in the MESD. Users must ensure that their activities adhere to these uses and to generally accepted educational standards.

Privileges and Responsibilities

Use of the network is a privilege and not a right. Based on need, MESD staff will have varying degrees of access to the network. A staff member's use of the network must support MESD's educational goals and objectives. Staff accessing the Internet are responsible for all of their activities that take place. When using any Internet site, staff must follow the rules for that site. MESD maintains the right to determine whether specific uses of the network are appropriate. Anyone using these resources inappropriately may lose computer access. This may lead to disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities.

A complex association of government agencies and regional and state networks coordinates Internet access. The smooth operation of the Internet relies on the proper conduct of end users who follow strict guidelines. These Acceptable Use Guidelines outline the responsibilities of MESD staff. They require efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of network resources.

Using the Internet gives staff access to communication with people all over the world. They can receive information and news as well as correspond with the providers of this information. They can access public domain programs and shareware as well as various discussion groups and university library materials.

Code of Conduct Governing Behavior on the Internet – Netiquette

Acceptable Use for Staff

1. Use the network to support education and perform research consistent with the MESD educational objectives. (See Board policy.)
2. Use the network in a way that will not disrupt network use by others.
3. Know the usage guidelines in this document when you use the network. (Read on.)
4. Protect your privacy and the privacy of those who work with you. Be cautious about revealing your complete name, address, telephone number, or Social Security number. Never reveal this information about students.
5. Use appropriate language when you write or communicate.
6. Respect copyright law. Cite all quotations, references, and sources.
7. Observe the rules of network etiquette ("netiquette").
8. Avoid or back out immediately from inappropriate Internet sites.

9. Notify a supervisor or site administrator of any message you feel is inappropriate or that makes you feel uncomfortable.
10. Report any problems or suspicious activity to a site administrator.
11. Use electronic mail appropriately. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to the authorities.
12. Adhere to guidelines for managing and composing effective e-mail messages:
 - a. Use a descriptive subject heading.
 - b. Keep messages short and to the point.
 - c. Use bulleted lists to break up long, complicated text.
 - d. Always sign messages or include a signature line.
 - e. Send complete attachments only as necessary. If it's feasible, send only the necessary components(s).
 - f. Don't YELL at others. Use CAPS LOCK only for emphasis. ALL CAPS is the equivalent of YELLING and is considered inflammatory and poor netiquette.
 - g. Do not post chain letters.
 - h. Avoid "spamming," or sending annoying or unnecessary messages to a large number of recipients. Send messages to only those people who need to receive them.
 - i. Edit your reply to an e-mail message to include only those items you refer to in your own message.
 - j. Clean house. Move messages you want to store into the appropriate folders. Delete the rest from your Inbox, Sent mail, and Trash.
13. Respect the privacy of others. Do not read the mail or files of others without their permission.

Unacceptable Use

1. Do not use the network for personal profit, private business, or political lobbying.
2. Do not seek information about other users. Do not copy or modify another user's files or data unless you are sharing common files.
3. Do not use passwords belonging to others.
4. Do not perform deliberate acts of vandalism, such as attempting to harm or destroy data of another user or other networks connected to the Internet. This includes uploading or creating computer viruses.
5. Do not try to disrupt the use of the network by others. Do not destroy, modify, or abuse hardware or software.
6. Do not use hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other antisocial behaviors on the network. Do not use impolite, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language.

7. Do not substitute e-mail for those issues needing face-to-face (or in person) dialog.
8. Do not violate copyright laws. Avoid copying and using others' materials as your own.
9. Do not install copyrighted or purchased software on MESD computers without permission. Follow the MESD software purchasing guidelines. User-owned software should not be on MESD computers.
10. Do not use the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network.
11. Do not allow students to use the Internet without the supervision of a teacher or other authorized staff member.
12. Do not download large files or perform other tasks that would cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others.
13. Do not expect that files stored on network servers will always be private.

Network Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority. This is especially true when the system involves many users. If you can identify a security problem on the network, notify a system administrator or technology coordinator. Do not show the problem to others.

All communications and information accessed via the network should be assumed to be the private property of MESD. MESD network administrators will review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that staff members use the system responsibly. MESD reserves the right to access stored records and/or e-mail messages. Courts have ruled that old messages may be subpoenaed.

Responsibility Statement

All users assume full liability - legal, financial, or otherwise - for their actions when using the network.

It is impossible to predict what information staff might locate on the Internet or receive via e-mail. The electronic information available to staff does not imply endorsement by MESD of the content. MESD does not make any guarantee as to the accuracy of information received via the Internet. MESD will make every effort to ensure responsible use of this educational support resource. Therefore, staff members will not hold MESD responsible for materials acquired on the Internet.

MESD makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. MESD will not be responsible for any damages staff may suffer. This damage could include loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, miss-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the system. It could include negligence on the part of MESD. It could also include a staff member's own errors or omissions. Staff members obtaining information via the Internet use it at their own risk.

Use of the network demands personal responsibility and understanding of these Acceptable Use Guidelines. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the Internet. Every MESD staff member accessing the Internet via the MESD network must understand the conditions of this policy before using the Internet or the MESD network services.