

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Caldwell County Schools offers electronic network access for students, teachers, and staff within the school system. A component of the network is the Internet.

The purpose of having the electronic network is to support the instructional program – the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, learning opportunities, information retrieval, searching strategies, research skills, critical thinking skills, and life-long learning.

Through the Internet, students, teachers and staff are able to access current information, news, resources from businesses, libraries, educational institutions, government agencies, research institutions and associations, and a variety of other sources. In addition, they may have communications with individuals and groups around the world by having electronic pen pals, participating in projects with other schools, and joining educational newsgroups.

Users (and parents of users, if the user is under 18 years old) must understand that the Caldwell County Schools system cannot control the content of the information available on the Internet. Some information may be controversial and/or offensive. The system does not condone the use of such materials and takes all reasonable precautions to limit access to these materials. The school system uses filtering and blocking technology, provides adult supervision, and trains students in responsible use of the service. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. School employees, students, and parents must be aware that access to the Internet will be withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others or who do not follow the rules and regulations established by the Caldwell County Schools and their school.

Rules and Regulations

I. Acceptable Use: The Caldwell County Schools networks are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner and must be in support of the educational objectives and student behavior guidelines of the Caldwell County Schools. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. No person shall have access to the system without having received appropriate training. A signed user release form must be on file with the district. Students under 18 must have the approval of a parent or guardian.

Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violating copyright/trademark laws
- Accessing email (e.g. Yahoo Mail), chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications (e.g. Instant message services) except those set up and/or approved by school administration
- Forwarding personal communications without the author's prior consent
- Using threatening or obscene material
- Accessing programs not appropriate for educational uses, including non-educational games and social networking programs such as "My Space."
- Downloading files from peer to peer sharing programs such as "Limewire/You Tube."
- Utilizing the network for commercial purposes
- Providing political or campaign information
- Using offensive or harassing statements or language including profanity, vulgarity, and/or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, and religious or political beliefs, i.e. cyberbullying
- Sending chain letters or soliciting money for any reason

Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following (cont'd):

- Use of any method to defeat content filtering is prohibited, i.e. changing computer settings, or the use of any URL that allows unrestricted access to websites.
- Disrupting the use of the network, including the use of any program that requires excessive bandwidth.
- Accessing programs or computer equipment not designated for student use, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities
- Users shall not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the system, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the system.

Netiquette Rules: Users must abide by network etiquette rules. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite -- rudeness is never acceptable
- Do not provide any personal information (such as address/telephone number, social security number, or checking/savings account numbers)
- Diligent effort must be made to conserve system resources. For example, users should frequently delete email and unused files

Disciplinary Action: The following measures can be taken as a result of unacceptable use.

- School disciplinary action as defined by Caldwell County Schools’
- Limitation or cancellation of user privileges
- Criminal prosecution

II. Privileges: The use of the Caldwell County Schools’ networks is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action.

III. Security: Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Attempts to login to the system as any other user or to share a password will result in disciplinary action. If a security problem is identified, notify the system administrator at the school. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.

IV. Email Accounts: Students may be given individual accounts for instructional purposes. Only email accounts set up by the school may be accessed. School rules will govern their use and email will be monitored. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.

V. Privacy: School authorities may monitor all student work and email. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Files stored on district servers and hard drives of individual computers are not private.

Disclaimer: Caldwell County Schools will not be responsible for any damages suffered, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, service interruptions, or inaccurate information. The user accepts personal responsibility for any information obtained or delivered via the network, including the sharing of personal information such as home address, checking account and credit card information.