

**Policy 441 USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS BY EMPLOYEES**

**I. PURPOSE**

The Northfield School District provides technology and telecommunications resources for district employees to support the educational and operational mission of the district. Access to and use of technology resources for students and employees is a fundamental part of the school day. This policy covers district employee use of all technology and telecommunications resources in the district. The purpose of this policy is to govern and guide the appropriate use of these resources.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The district provides technology and devices to employees in order to support quality education, information and communication systems. It is the expectation that staff will use these technologies for meaningful educational activities that support the curriculum and district operations needs, as well as provide strong guidance and supervision toward appropriate student use.

**III. EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY USE**

1. Each employee shall act responsibly when utilizing technology resources.
  - a. The use of the district technology services and devices is a privilege, not a right. Employees may occasionally access district technology services and devices for personal use as long as it does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance. Employees will use electronic information resources in compliance with all existing school board policies.
  - b. Devices issued to a district employee will be used by the employee only. If an employee is using a shared device, they must use their own unique credentials and user profiles. The Director of Technology Services or their designee may make exceptions.
  - c. Employees will not:
    - Use district technology resources to access student, guardian, or staff data that is not needed to carry out their role for the district.
    - Use the district technology resources to access, display, store, upload, download, distribute or print pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit materials.
    - Use the district technology resources to access, display, store, upload, download, distribute or print materials that advocate violence, harassment or discrimination or are disruptive in any way.
    - Send abusive, intimidating, harassing, or unwanted material, such as advertising, causing the work of others to be disrupted.
    - Use the district technology resources to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade, vandalize or disrupt equipment, software, or system performance, will not violate the network's security in any way, and will not use the district technology and devices in any way so as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
    - Use the district technology resources to gain unauthorized access to resources, passwords, accounts, information or files without direct permission from a network authority.
    - Use district technology resources to violate copyright laws, download or pirate software or plagiarize information.

- Mishandle devices in a way that will cause damage to the device. Multiple occurrences may result in the employee's financial responsibility for repair or replacement.
  - Send or forward unnecessary or frivolous emails or messages in any quantity to other users of the district email system. Transmission of chain letters and pyramid schemes is strictly prohibited.
  - Use district technology resources for commercial purposes, political lobbying or solicitation of any kind.
  - Use non-district equipment to access the district wired, password-protected wireless networks, or district accounts without explicit permission of the director of technology services or their designee. This does not apply to district systems for which users have their own username and password.
  - Use district technology resources to communicate under a false name or designation or a name or designation they are not authorized to use, including instances in conjunction with representing that they are somehow acting on behalf of or under the auspices of the district.
  - Use the name "Northfield Public Schools" in any form or use any symbol or logo or graphic used by the district without the district's prior consent.
2. Each employee shall respect copyright and other intellectual property rights.
- a. Copying of data and files belonging to others will be considered a violation of district policies, a violation of law, and may constitute fraud, plagiarism or theft.
  - b. Software licensed by the district must only be used in accordance with applicable license specifications and agreements. Illegal copying and/or installing of software on district or personal computers is strictly prohibited.
  - c. Modifying or damaging information without authorization including but not limited to altering data, introducing viruses or damaging files or data is unethical and a violation of district policies.
3. Each employee shall abide by security restrictions on all systems and information.
- a. The district establishes data security classifications, implements procedural and electronic security controls, and maintains records regarding assigned security authorization. Data security measures apply to all users of technology services and devices.
  - b. Access to technology services and devices is controlled by the use of unique credentials (usernames and passwords). Unique credentials are assigned to specific users and each user is accountable for all actions occurring under their access credentials.
  - c. Users shall not allow anyone else to use their credentials to access technology services and devices. District technology staff and administrators in line with their duties and responsibilities can request access to credentials at any time
  - d. Users shall not leave their user accounts logged in on unattended district technology services and devices.
  - e. Users shall not store credentials where others may access them. Users who suspect their account has been compromised must report it to the technology services and change their password as soon as possible.
  - f. Attempting to evade or disable desktop security systems, or other security precautions, or assisting others in doing so threatens work, privacy, and the integrity of district information, and is a serious violation of district policy.

- g. Users must immediately report to Technology Services (i.e. within 24 hours if possible) when they believe that a digital technology under their control has been lost, stolen, compromised, or significantly damaged.
    - h. All acquisitions whether by purchase or otherwise of digital technologies or digital resources must be approved in advance by the Director of Technology Services or their designee to ensure functionality with district technology and devices. In most cases, users are able to install their own software via district software installation portals.
    - i. User accounts will be disabled and users are required to return district-issued digital technology to the district upon unenrollment, unemployment, long long-term leave with the district. The Director of Technology Services or their designee may make exceptions.
4. Each employee shall recognize limitations to privacy and use of electronic communications. Employees and staff do not own district technology and telecommunications equipment or software. The district reserves the right to access user files at any time to protect the integrity of the systems and property of the district.
  - a. The district may examine or make copies of files that are suspected of misuse, or that have been corrupted or damaged. Files may be subject to search by law enforcement agencies if files contain information, which may be used as evidence in a court of law.
  - b. 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 district policy. The 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 district policies.
  - c. District-owned laptops and mobile devices may be used outside of school except when employees are directed by technology or administrative staff to leave equipment on site.
5. Each employee shall be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on district property may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under state and federal legislation, including the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
  - a. The district can and will monitor the online activities of all employees and students, and employ “filtering” protection measures during any use by employees and/or students. The “filtering” measures are intended to block internet sites that contain violent, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit materials. The district will comply with any and all state and federal requirements around internet filtering for student use. The use of this software does not guarantee that students or staff will not be able to obtain objectionable or pornographic materials over the internet, but the chances have been minimized.
  - b. It is mandatory that staff monitor and supervise student use of the internet and all other technology resources at school to ensure appropriate, educational use.
6. Each employee shall be aware of limitations of district liability. Use of the district system is at the user’s own risk. While the district will take precautions with the installation of hardware and software in the security of data and systems, there are no foolproof means for absolutely securing all data and systems.

- a. The district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on district disks, tapes, hard drives, servers, vendor-provided systems, cloud-based services, and/or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service.
  - b. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the district network/internet/email system. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the district system or the Internet.
7. Each employee shall refrain from text messaging or using electronic mail while driving. In compliance with [Minnesota Statute 169.475](#) Use of Wireless Communications Device, it is the policy of the district to:
- a. Prohibit all text messaging, including electronic mail, by all district employees and encourage contractors to adopt policies that prohibit text messaging while driving. This prohibition includes the time waiting for a traffic signal to change.
    - (1) While driving district owned, leased or rented vehicles.
    - (2) While driving a personally owned vehicle when on official district business.
    - (3) While driving any vehicle, even during off-duty hours, and using electronic equipment supplied by the district.
  - b. Take appropriate disciplinary action for violation of this mandatory ban on texting, up to and including removal from employment.
  - c. Encourage district employees and contractors and their families to refrain from texting, or from engaging in any behavior that distracts attention from driving safely, at any time.

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Board of Education  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 659  
Northfield, Minnesota