

# Vernon Public Schools Acceptable Use Guidelines (VCMS)

## Introduction

Vernon Public Schools recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, collaborate, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide access to technologies for student and staff use.

This document outlines the guidelines and behaviors that users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices as detailed in Vernon Board of Education Policies *5131.81, 5131.82, 6141.3, 6141.326, & 6141.328*.

- The Vernon Public Schools network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Vernon Public Schools makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

## Technologies Covered

Vernon Public Schools provides access to the Internet, computers, mobile devices, video-conferencing capabilities, online collaboration tools, Google Drive accounts, email, and more. As new technologies emerge, Vernon Public Schools will attempt to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover all available technologies, not just those specifically listed.

## Web Access and Filtering

Vernon Public Schools provides its users with access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. That access will be restricted in compliance with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Users are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should follow district protocol to alert an IT staff member or submit the site for review.

## Email

Vernon Public Schools may provide users with email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Please remember that all email is part of public record and may be monitored. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. **Users are responsible for all activity under their account.**

Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

## Social / Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, Vernon Public Schools may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should not to share personally-identifying information online or include it in Google Drive files.

## Personally-Owned Devices Policy (Board Policy 6141.328)

If not being used with permission from a teacher or staff member for educational purposes, students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smartphones, and cell phones) put away during school hours. When using a personal device during the school day, internet access must be through the district provided gateway.

## Plagiarism

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words, images, audio or video from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

## Personal Safety

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission. If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

## Cyberbullying

Users must comply with Connecticut Law regarding cyber bullying. Connecticut law defines cyberbullying as "any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephones or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications." (Con. Gen Stat. Ann. §10-222d.) Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

## Violations of this Acceptable Use Guidelines

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- Notification to parents
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution

**I have read and understood this Acceptable Use Guidelines and will abide by it:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Signature)                      \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**I have read and discussed this Acceptable Use Guidelines with my child:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian Signature)                      \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

### Home Technology Access Survey:

Do you currently have **reliable internet access** at home and expect to have it for the entire school year?

Yes | No

Which **devices** are available to your student at home? (choose all that apply)

- Computer or Laptop
- Tablet
- Smart Phone