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524 INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

Adopted July 2021

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the Gentry Academy computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

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

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Gentry Academy is providing students and employees with access to Gentry Academy computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the Internet. Gentry Academy system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

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1. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit, or distribute:
 - a. pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
 - b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
 - c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
 - d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;
 - e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
2. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit, or distribute 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.
3. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state, or federal statute or law.
4. Users will not use Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy system software, hardware, or wiring or take any action to violate Gentry Academy's security system, and will not use Gentry Academy system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
5. Users will not use Gentry Academy 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.
6. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs, or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user

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privately without permission of the person who sent the message. **[Note:**

- a. This paragraph does not prohibit the posting of employee contact information on Gentry Academy webpages or communications between employees and other individuals when such communications are made for education-related purposes (i.e., communications with parents or other staff members related to students).
- b. Employees creating or posting school-related webpages may include personal contact information about themselves on a webpage. However, employees may not post personal contact information or other personally identifiable information about students unless:
 - (1) such information is classified by Gentry Academy as directory information and verification is made that Gentry Academy has not received notice from a parent/guardian or eligible student that such information is not to be designated as directory information in accordance with Policy 515; or
 - (2) such information is not classified by Gentry Academy as directory information but written consent for release of the information to be posted has been obtained from a parent/guardian or eligible student in accordance with Policy 515.

In addition, prior to posting any personal contact or personally identifiable information on a school-related webpage, employees shall obtain written approval of the content of the postings from the building administrator.

- c. These prohibitions specifically prohibit a user from utilizing Gentry Academy system to post personal information about a user or another individual on social networks, including, but not limited to, social networks such as "Facebook," "Twitter," "Instagram," "Snapchat," and "Reddit," and similar websites or applications.
7. Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated Gentry Academy official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to Gentry Academy system or any other system through Gentry Academy 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. Messages and records on Gentry Academy system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate school authorities.
8. Users will not use Gentry Academy 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.
9. Users will not use Gentry Academy system for conducting business, for

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unauthorized commercial purposes, or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of Gentry Academy. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate Gentry Academy official.

10. Users will not use Gentry Academy system to engage in bullying or cyberbullying in violation of Gentry Academy's Bullying Prohibition Policy (MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514). This prohibition includes using any technology or other electronic communication off school premises to the extent that student learning or the school environment is substantially and materially disrupted.
- B. A student or employee engaging in the foregoing unacceptable uses of the Internet when off Gentry Academy premises also may be in violation of this policy as well as other Gentry Academy policies. Examples of such violations include, but are not limited to, situations where Gentry Academy system is compromised or if a Gentry Academy employee or student is negatively impacted. If Gentry Academy receives a report of an unacceptable use originating from a non-school computer or resource, Gentry Academy may investigate such reports to the best of its ability. Students or employees may be subject to disciplinary action for such conduct, including, but not limited to, suspension or cancellation of the use or access to Gentry Academy computer system and the Internet and discipline under other appropriate Gentry Academy policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, or termination of employment.
- C. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate Gentry Academy official. In the case of a Gentry Academy employee, the immediate disclosure shall be to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the building administrator. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. In certain rare instances, a user also may 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 or, in the case of a Gentry Academy employee, the building administrator.
- D. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or
 2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
 3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

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- C. Software filtering technology shall be narrowly tailored and shall not discriminate based on viewpoint.
- D. An administrator, supervisor, or other person authorized by the Education Director may disable the technology protection measure, during use by an adult, to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- E. Gentry Academy will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

VII. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of Gentry Academy computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with Gentry Academy policies and the mission of Gentry Academy.

VIII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

- A. By authorizing use of Gentry Academy system, Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of Gentry Academy system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another Gentry Academy 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 Gentry Academy 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. Gentry Academy employees should be aware that Gentry Academy retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and e-mail files. In addition, Gentry Academy employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on Gentry Academy system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- F. Gentry Academy will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with Gentry Academy policies conducted through Gentry Academy system.

IX. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper

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Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and employees of Gentry Academy.

- 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 for students must be read and signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher. The Internet Use Agreement form for employees must be signed by the employee. The form must then be filed at the school office. As supervising teachers change, the agreement signed by the new teacher shall be attached to the original agreement.

X. LIMITATION ON GENTRY ACADEMY LIABILITY

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

XI. USER NOTIFICATION

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

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3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
4. Notification that, even though Gentry Academy 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 and/or the student's parents.
6. Notification that the collection, creation, reception, maintenance, and dissemination of data via the Internet, including electronic communications, is governed by Policy 406, Public and Private Personnel Data, and Policy 515, Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.
7. Notification that, should the user violate Gentry Academy's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
8. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

XII. PARENTS' 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 Gentry Academy system and of the Internet if the student is accessing Gentry Academy system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using Gentry Academy resources/accounts to access the Internet and that Gentry Academy 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 notification that the parents have the option to request alternative educational activities not requiring Internet access and the material to exercise this option.
 4. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher prior to use by the student.

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5. A statement that Gentry Academy's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

XIII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A. Gentry Academy administration may develop appropriate user notification forms, guidelines, and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, such guidelines, forms, and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The administration shall revise the user notifications, including student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. Gentry Academy 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.

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