

STUDENT COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

The Gorham School Committee believes that the resources available through the Internet are of significant value in the learning process and preparing students for future success. At the same time, the unregulated availability of information and communication on the Internet require that schools establish reasonable controls for lawful, efficient and appropriate use of this technology. The School Department provides computers, networks and Internet access to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff.

Student use of school computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to comply with this policy and the accompanying procedures (IJNDB-R). Students who violate the policy and/or procedures may have their computer privileges limited, suspended, or revoked and may be subject to disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement, and/or legal action. This policy and the accompanying rules also apply to laptops issued directly to students, whether they are used at school or off school premises.

All Gorham School Department computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of the Gorham School Department at all times. The Gorham School Department reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers whether they are used on school property or elsewhere.

While reasonable precautions will be taken to supervise student use of the Internet, including filtering technology designed to block materials that are obscene or harmful to minors, parents should be aware that the Gorham School Department cannot reasonably prevent all instances of inappropriate computer and Internet use by students in violation of School Committee policies and rules, including access to objectionable materials and communications with persons outside of school. The Gorham School Department is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information that students obtain through the Internet.

In the interest of Internet safety, the Gorham School Department also provides information to students and parents about online behavior, including interacting with other people on social networking sites and in chat rooms, the dangers of engaging in “hacking” and other unlawful online activities, and issues surrounding “sexting” and cyber-bullying awareness and response. The Superintendent/designees shall be responsible for providing age-appropriate Internet safety trainings and “digital citizenship” as part of the educational program and for documentation of Internet safety training.

Before a student is allowed to use school computers and Internet services, the student and the student’s parent/guardian must sign and return the Computer/Internet Access Acknowledgement. The signed acknowledgement will be retained by the school.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and accompanying procedures, and for advising the Committee on the need for any future amendments or revisions to the policy. The superintendent may develop additional administrative procedures governing the day-to-day management, security, and operations of the school unit’s computer and network systems and to prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors and operations of the Gorham School Department’s computer system-as long as they are consistent with the Committee’s policies. The Superintendent may delegate specific responsibilities to building principals and others and he/she deems appropriate.

Students and parents shall be informed of this policy and the accompanying rules through student handbooks, the school website, and/or other means selected by the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: 20 USC § 677 (Enhancing Education through Technology Act)
47 USC § 254(h)(5) (Children’s Internet Protection Act)
47 CFR § 54.52 (Children’s Internet Protection Act Certifications)
Federal Communications Commission Order and Report 11-125, (August 10, 2011)

Cross Reference: IJNDB-R – Student Computer and Internet Use Rules
GCSA – Employee Computer and Internet Use

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