ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS
INTERNET USAGE AND EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT

Access to Technology Resources Policy

In order to enhance educational opportunities for its students and for employees to be able to work in a professional and intellectually-stimulating environment, it shall be the policy of the Oneonta City Board of Education to permit access to and use of developing technology equipment and resources, including but not limited to, the Internet. Such access and use shall be restricted to faculty, students, and other persons who are engaged in bona fide educational and administrative activities which serve and are consistent with identified educational objectives and authorized support functions. To those ends, the Oneonta City Board of Education is authorized to establish and impose reasonable rules and regulations regarding access to and use of school-based technology equipment and resources and to require adherence to said rules and regulations through such means as the "Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement" and by the application of appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures.

Statement of Caution and Consequences

Board policy restricts access to and use of technology equipment and resources, including the Internet, to instructional and related purposes with the intent to further educational goals and objectives. However, because of the nature of the technology, it is impossible to ensure that a user's intent upon doing so will not be able to gain access to unsuitable material and data through misuse of computers or the Internet. Oneonta City Schools (OCS) system subscribes to a filtering service to filter or block inappropriate Internet access. Thus, it is the intention of OCS that all technology resources will be used in accordance with any and all school system policies and procedures as well as local, state and federal laws. Internet activity can and will be monitored, along with other aspects of technology usage. Successful or unsuccessful attempts to bypass the Internet filter, misuse of equipment, access to prohibited sites by using proxies or other resources are a violation of this agreement and may result in denial or cancellation of access privileges and are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct and other applicable policies and regulations. Users are also subject to any civil penalties or criminal sanctions that may arise from unlawful use of the Internet.

Regulations Regarding the Use of Internet Resources

1. Acceptable Use. The use of technology equipment and resources, including the Internet, must be in support of education or research, through the provision of unique resources and opportunities for collaboration among students, teachers and administrators. Use of the Internet must be in support of this and consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Non-educational use may be limited by faculty/staff. Transmission or receipt of any material in violation of any state or federal law is prohibited.

2. Privileges and Expectations of Users. The use of equipment, the OCS network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and unauthorized, abusive or inappropriate use may result in restriction or cancellation of those privileges. Users are expected to take proper care of technology equipment and resources. Users of the network will not use their account to obtain, post, view, download or otherwise gain access to potentially objectionable materials such as any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, violent, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material. Such conduct would include, but is not limited to, placing unlawful information on or through the schools' computer network, accessing another person's files or e-mail, and using obscene, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language or images in

either public or private files or messages. Users of OCS technology resources must be aware that OCS cannot assume any liability arising out of the illegal or inappropriate use of technology resources.

Students and staff are responsible for appropriate, good behavior on school computer networks and the Internet just as they are in a classroom or on school property. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. It is understood that parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the values that are above the school standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Because communications on the network, e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications are often public in nature, all users should be careful to maintain appropriate and responsible standards. There can be no assurance that e-mail or other forms of direct electronic communication will be confidential and/or private. All users should be aware that information sent via e-mail, in documents, or other means are considered legal documents and can be subpoenaed. All correspondence should be professional in nature. All staff members should follow appropriate behavior standards and maintain the utmost professionalism when posting information on social media sites, web-sites, and during any personal communication relating to school, student, or personal issues whether it is through the OCS network or an outside network.

Safe Internet practices should always be followed. Never disclose personal information and never plan to meet anyone encountered online. Access to network service will be provided only to students and employees who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. To that end, OCS supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent access. To gain access, all students must obtain parental permission and must sign and return the Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement form. All employees must sign the Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement Form.

3. Personal Devices. These Internet usage and equipment policies and procedures pertain to technology equipment personally owned by school employees and students which are brought into school facilities. All personal technologies used on the OCS campus are subject to this agreement and may be used only if such use is in compliance with all school system policies, procedures, and guidelines as well as local, state and federal laws. (This also includes any external storage medium including Dropbox, Google Docs or similar online storage.) Staff and students are required to sign the Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement to gain access to the OCS network, the Internet, and other technology resources. Attempts to circumvent defined procedures to access to the OCS network on personal devices without proper authority may result in disciplinary action for students or staff. OCS is not responsible for any hardware or software damage or repair to personal devices on the OCS network.

4. Network and E-Mail Guidelines. OCS network and Internet users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette and are expected to act in a considerate and responsible manner. The following infractions are not permitted on any OCS computer, computer network, personal device accessing the OCS network, the Internet or any technology resource. This list is not all-inclusive; discretion should be used at all times.
a. Sending, displaying, posting or downloading offensive, profane, obscene, pornographic, disrespectful, threatening, or prurient messages or pictures.
b. Harassing, insulting, embarrassing, threatening, bullying or attacking others or their work.
c. Using obscene, racist, profane, discriminatory, threatening or inflammatory language in a document, email, web-site, posting, etc.
d. Using a digital camera, camera phone, or any other device capable of storing a still or video image to take inappropriate and /or embarrassing pictures. Editing or modifying digital photos with the intent to embarrass, harass or bully.

e. Posting any false or damaging information about other people, the school system, or other organizations.
f. Damaging computer equipment, any technology resource, computer systems, computer networks, or documents created by other users. This includes changing workstations and printer configurations.
g. Violating copyright laws. Plagiarizing computer-copyrighted materials constitutes inappropriate behavior.
h. Use of technology resources to create illegal materials (i.e. counterfeit money, fake identification, etc.) or illegal activities (i.e. threats, instructions of how to perform an illegal act, any form of pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities, or any illegal or inappropriate activity).
i. Using another user's password.
j. Accessing or trespassing in another user's files, folders, or work or any form of 'hacking.'
k. Intentionally wasting limited resources.
l. Disrupting the use of the network by other users.
m. Uploading or creating computer viruses, malware or spyware.
n. Re-posting non-academic, personal communications without the original author's prior consent.
o. Installing software or downloading unauthorized files, music, games, programs or other electronic media onto a workstation, laptop, network drive or any other technology device.
p. Attempts to circumvent network security or internet access restrictions by any means.
q. Revealing personal information (i.e. photographs, addresses, or telephone numbers).
r. E-mailing outside the school system or storing/saving on external storage drives or portable devices that do not remain on campus, electronic copies of student or staff personal information. This information includes, but is not limited to data containing social security number, information protected by FERPA, and any other sensitive and/or protected information.
s. Using the network for commercial or political purposes.
t. Ordering anything from the Internet is strictly prohibited by students. Any charges incurred would have to be paid by the user and are not the responsibility of the school.

5. Security
a. As a registered user of this network, users are responsible for the use of their account and password. Users may only log on to the network with their assigned user name and password. Users should not disclose their password to anyone. If a user feels that their password has been compromised, the user should notify the technology staff immediately. Unauthorized access, including "hacking" is prohibited.
b. Users who discover or suspect a security problem should notify the teacher, the technology staff, or principal, and should not discuss the problem with or demonstrate it to other users.
c. Any user who receives threatening or unwelcomed communications or encounter materials that violate the school code of conduct should immediately bring them to the attention of an administrator, teacher, or the technology staff.
d. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network.

6. Procedures for Use
a. In addition to a signed Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement form, student users must have permission from their instructors before using computers, the Internet, or related technology equipment or resources.
b. Users may not play games or use computer resources for non-academic activities unless given permission to do so by the teacher, superintendent, administrators, or technology staff.

c. Users may not waste or take without permission supplies (such as paper, printer cartridges, external storage devices, etc.) that are provided by OCS.
d. No user of electronic media may purchase and/or install technology hardware or software without the written approval of the technology staff.
e. Damage or vandalism of any technology resource including, but not limited to, equipment, computer networks, or programs will result in punishment as defined in the school conduct policy.
f. Any use of technology resources that reduces the efficiency of use for others can be considered a violation of this agreement.

7. Oneonta City Schools Domain
a. Any and all devices connected to the OCS network are considered to be in the private domain of OCS.
b. Any and all devices connected to the OCS network are subject to inspection, search and monitoring by the superintendent, administrators, or appropriate members of the technology staff, including data stored by individual users on individual school or personal devices. Users should be aware that activities might be monitored at any time, without notice.
c. All network activity is logged and subject to review by the superintendent, administrators or technology staff members periodically.
d. No information or resource connected to the OCS network should be considered personal or private from the appropriate members of the technology staff, administrators or superintendent.
e. Rules and regulations of system usage will be modified, added, and posted from time to time by the administrators of the OCS network. Users of the network are subject to these additional rules and regulations.
f. All users have a right to privacy. However, if a user is believed to be in violation of the guidelines, the superintendent, administrators or technology staff members may review communications to maintain system and network integrity and to insure that students and staff are using these resources responsibly.

E-mail Guidelines for OCS Employees

Legal Risks

Email is a school business or educational communication tool, and users are obliged to use this tool in a responsible, effective, and lawful manner. Email lends itself to a kind of informality yet, from a legal perspective, may have the same implications as would any written communication. Any email is discoverable in a due process situation or other legal action. In addition, any email exchanged by a school system employee is public record. Other legal risks of email for Oneonta City Schools and/or their network users include the following:

- sending emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks;
- forwarding emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks;
- transmitting or forwarding confidential information;
- forwarding or copying messages without permission or implied permission; and/or
- knowingly sending an attachment that contains a virus that severely affects another network or other users

By following the guidelines in this document, the email user can minimize the legal risks involved in the use of email. If any user disregards the rules set out in these guidelines, the user will be fully liable and Oneonta City Schools will disassociate itself from the user as far as legally possible.

- Do not send or forward emails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks. If you receive an email containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, promptly notify your supervisor.
- Use caution if you forward a message without implied permission or without acquiring permission from the sender first, especially if it contains sensitive or private information.
- Do not forge or attempt to forge email messages.
- Do not send email messages using another person's or a bogus email account.
- Do not copy a message or attachment belonging to another user without the permission or implied permission of the originator.
- Do not disguise or attempt to disguise your identity when sending email.

Best Practices

Oneonta City Schools considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content and of speedy replies in conveying a professional image and in delivering good service. The use of email in education, however, is proliferating and the precise legal issues regarding appropriate use are yet to be determined. We are confident that—

- Any email exchanged by school system employees about individual students is public record.
- Any email pertaining to a particular student is discoverable in a due process situation or other legal action.
- The nature of email lends itself to impulsive, overly informal, and sometimes unprofessional communication.

Therefore Oneonta City Schools urges users to adhere to the following guidelines:
Guidance on Email between School Employees and Parents/Guardians

Examples of generally appropriate use of email between school employees and parents/guardians:

- Teachers invite parents to provide email addresses and then send out emails to those addresses reporting on classroom activities, projects, and assignments. These messages are generic and do not refer to specific students.
- Teachers may initiate or respond to email from a parent or guardian about a specific child, exchanging objective not subjective information such as the student's attendance, participation, homework, and performance in class.

Examples of inappropriate use of email between school employees and parents/guardians:
- Using email to report on serious problems regarding individual students.
- Using email to discuss confidential and sensitive matters, including:
  - Medical/psychiatric/psychological diagnoses and treatments.
  - Contents of special education and/or Section 504 evaluations, intervention plans, IEPs, 504 plans, disciplinary matters.
  - Family problems and other sensitive family information.
- Using language that is subjective, judgmental, unprofessional, pejorative, and/or labeling. Examples:
  - "Have you considered that Johnny might have ADHD?"
  - "Overall, I think that Johnny is unmotivated/lazy."
  - "I don't think there is anything wrong with Johnny except his negative attitude."

Email between teachers and parents shall be positive and/or general in nature when possible. Discussions involving serious problems and any and all protected information (medical, psychological, psychiatric, Special Education, and Section 504, and disciplinary matters) should occur in person or by telephone.
Parents may initiate inappropriate email exchanges. Example: "Johnny is in your American History class and is failing. His father is an alcoholic and we are divorced. Johnny has ADHD and clinical depression. Can you please tell me how he is doing in your class and what I can do to help him?"

That kind of message shall be deleted and the teacher receiving it should call the parent who sent it. Alternately, the teacher could reply to it, deleting everything from the body of the email sent by the parent, and then respond with directions about how the teacher can be reached by telephone or in person. Do not regard a parent or guardian's initiation of this kind of email exchange as constituting permission for you to discuss these matters via email.

Guidance on Email between School Employees Concerning Students
Examples of generally appropriate use of email between school employees:
- Emails which provide positive information, objective comments, and/or neutral information regarding school performance. In other words, conducting straight-forward business, staying away from sensitive and confidential areas.

Examples of inappropriate use of email between school employees:
- Using email to report on serious problems regarding individual students.
- Using email to discuss confidential and sensitive matters, including
  - Medical/psychiatric/psychological diagnoses and treatments.

- Contents of special education and/or Section 504 evaluations, intervention plans, IEPs, 504 plans, disciplinary matters.
- Family problems and other sensitive family information.
- Using, in email, language that is subjective, judgmental, unprofessional, pejorative, and/or labeling. Examples:
  - "I think Johnny has ADHD"
  - "Overall, I think that Johnny is unmotivated/lazy"
  - "I don't think there is anything wrong with Johnny except his negative attitude."
  - "I think this child's problem is his home life."

Discussions involving severe problems, subjective comments, and any and all protected information (medical, psychological, psychiatric, Special Education, and Section 504, and disciplinary matters) should occur in person or by telephone.
General Best Practices involving all email are as follows:

<u>**Writing emails:**</u>
- Use short, descriptive subject lines.
- Avoid lengthy, detailed email messages. Consider using an attachment for "How To" information, directions, procedures, processes, or similar types of information.
- Avoid unnecessary attachments or large file attachments such as multiple pictures, mini movies, etc. AVOID USING ALL CAPITALS.
- If using cc or bcc feature, take steps to inform the cc or bcc recipient of any action expected unless the action is explicit in the email. The bcc option is often used to avoid revealing recipient email addresses to the entire group receiving the email; otherwise, the bcc option shall be used sparingly if at all.
- If you forward emails, state clearly what action you expect the recipient to take.
- Use the spell checker before you send out an email.
- If the content of an email is not of a public nature, consider using another form of communication or protect the information by using a password.
- Only mark emails as important if they really are important.

<u>**Replying to emails:**</u>
- Emails shall be answered within 24 hours, and at minimum employees are expected to check email at least once per day.
- Responses shall not reveal confidential information and shall be professional.

<u>**Electronic Social Networking, Instant Messaging including Texting, etc.**</u>
Electronic social networking and/or instant messaging, such as but not limited to Twitter, IM, or texting, among staff and students is a particularly sensitive matter in a time when growing numbers of school employees maintain social networking accounts, email extensively in their personal lives, and are accustomed to using instant messaging services.

An absolute prohibition of communicating electronically with students seems excessive. On the other hand, teachers and school staff shall maintain the highest standards should they choose to interact with students through electronic media. Below are some typical situations on which employees might need guidance.

Guidelines below are presented in a Q&A format.

Q: Is it ok for me to initiate electronic communications with a student?

A: If a teacher initiates overly personal contact with students outside of school, whether in person or electronically, he or she may create an impression of an unhealthy interest in that student's personal life and may leave himself or herself open to an accusation of inappropriate conduct. Therefore, caution shall be exercised in this type of communication.

Q: What if I receive an email or other electronic message such as a text from a student?

 A: This very much depends on the nature of the communication received. We would strongly discourage any use of texting, instant messaging or "chat"-type communication with students for purposes other than school related communications. Do not engage in social "chat" with students. If a communication is received which appears to be a social greeting, you might do best just to acknowledge it in an appropriate way at school. A very brief acknowledging electronic response might be appropriate in some circumstances. However, it is perfectly OK not to respond to such greetings. If you choose to not respond, making an extra effort to cheerfully greet the student at school might be appropriate.

If a student sends a message with disturbing content, you should discuss this with your administrator or supervisor, including a school counselor in the discussion as needed.

If a student sends a message that appears to suggest an emergency (an allegation of abuse or a student sharing suicidal thoughts or plans), try to contact your administrator or supervisor at once.

Q: What about Facebook accounts or other social networking sites? Should I respond to an invitation to become a student's "Friend"?

A: We recommend that you not engage in online social networking with students unless the site is used for school information or academic reasons only. This would only be an issue, of course, if you choose to maintain a Facebook, or similar account. If you do so, we recommend that you be extremely cautious about the content of your profiles and pages. If you are strictly using a social networking site for school related topics and stay away from personal content then these sites shall be treated much like any other educational blog. (However, the use of comments, "writing on walls," and so on, would be likely to lead to major problems if an approval process is not in place before posting.) You may find that it is easier to simply tell your students that you have a policy not to accept students as "friends."

General Email Information

Virus Protection and Filtering

Incoming and outgoing emails sent to or received from Oneonta City Schools' Exchange email server are scanned for viruses, spam, and content. However, users are expected to exercise caution when opening emails from unknown users or when using the web-based email client from home computers.

- Incoming emails may be blocked if the message size is over 100,000 KB or if there are multiple attachments.

Disclaimer
- Oneonta City Schools recommends that employees add a disclaimer to outgoing emails or automatically attach a disclaimer such as the one below to each email sent outside the school system.
"This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the system manager. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Oneonta City Schools. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. The company accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email."

System Monitoring

Although Oneonta City Board policy permits personal use of school email accounts, users shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the Oneonta City Schools' computer system. Emails may be monitored without prior notification if Oneonta City Schools deems this necessary. If there is evidence that users are not adhering to the guidelines set out in this policy, Oneonta City Schools reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.

Email Accounts

Email accounts are assigned to new employees when their employment is approved by the Board of Education and when the new employee has read and signed acknowledgement and understanding of the Oneonta City Schools Technology Usage Policy. All email accounts maintained on the Oneonta City email and Internet communication systems are property of Oneonta City Schools. Oneonta City maintains student accounts, employee accounts and employee-sponsored accounts.

Passwords shall not be given to other people and shall be changed if the user believes his/her password is no longer secure. Email accounts are deleted immediately when employees retire, resign, or take leave from the school system for a period of six months or more. Only Oneonta City employees are given email accounts. Upon request by the administration, Oneonta City employee sponsored accounts, such as PTA accounts or accounts for contract employees may be created. Employee-sponsored accounts are subject to these guidelines and it is the responsibility of the sponsoring employee to educate the user of this and all other relevant technology-related policies and guidelines.

Electronic Communications for Personal Use

Although Oneonta City Schools' email and Internet communication systems is meant for school business, Oneonta City Schools allows the reasonable use of email for personal use if certain guidelines are adhered to:

- Personal use of email shall not interfere with work.
- Personal emails shall also adhere to the guidelines in this policy.
- Personal emails shall be deleted regularly so as not to clog the system.

The forwarding of chain letters, junk mail, inappropriate jokes and executable files is strictly forbidden.
- Do not send personal mass mailings.
- Do not send emails for personal gain, to solicit business for friends, family, etc., or for political purposes.
- All messages distributed via the school system's email and Internet communication systems, even personal emails, are Oneonta City Schools' property.

Questions

If you have any questions or comments about these guidelines, please contact your principal or immediate supervisor. If you do not have any questions Oneonta City Schools presume that you understand and are aware of the rules and guidelines and will adhere to them.

ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS
INTERNET USAGE AND EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT
STUDENT NOTICE OF RECEIPT

Student's Name: _____   **Grade:** _____
                              (please print)

The student listed above and his or her parent/guardian hereby acknowledges by their signatures that they **have received, read and agreed to abide by the Oneonta City Schools Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement**.

I understand that the purpose of any technology equipment or resource is to support research and education and will be consistent with the educational objectives of the Oneonta City Schools Board of Education. As a user of Oneonta City Schools' technology equipment and resources, I acknowledge my responsibility for my actions and my conduct in using any technology resource. The use of all electronic devices and networks is a privilege, not a right. Any action by a user that is determined by a system administrator to constitute an inappropriate or unauthorized use of any system or to improperly restrict or inhibit other members from using and enjoying any system is strictly prohibited and may result in terminating the user's access privileges. I further understand that any or all of the following sanctions could be imposed if any of the policies or procedures regarding the use of Oneonta City Schools technology equipment or resources, including the Internet, are violated:

- Loss of access
- Additional disciplinary action to be determined based on existing policies
- Legal action when applicable

Care for and Return of Equipment

I acknowledge by my signature that while I am a student at Oneonta City Schools, I am expected to take proper care of school and personal equipment and technology resources. I understand that I am expected to return all property of Oneonta City Schools in proper working order when instructed or upon withdrawal. This agreement includes, but is not limited to, the following: laptops, Chromebooks, MacBooks, iPads, eReaders, video and digital cameras, calculators, external hard drives, cables, charging connectors, etc. I understand that failure to return equipment will be considered theft by the school system and may lead to criminal prosecution.

Student's Signature:_____   **Date:**_____

As a parent or legal guardian of the minor student signing above, I have received, read and will ensure compliance of the Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement and grant permission for my son or daughter to use and access technology equipment and resources, including the Internet.

_____   _____ _____
Parent Signature   **Parent name (please print)**   **Date**

ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS
INTERNET USAGE AND EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT
EMPLOYEE NOTICE OF RECEIPT

Employee Name: _____ **School:** _____
                              (please print)

I acknowledge by my signature that I have received, read and will abide by both the Oneonta City Schools Internet Usage and Equipment Agreement and the Oneonta City Schools Employee E-mail Guidelines. I understand that the purpose of any technology equipment or resource is to support research and education and will be consistent with the educational objectives of the Oneonta City Schools Board of Education. As a user of Oneonta City Schools' technology equipment and resources, I acknowledge my responsibility for my actions and my conduct in using any technology resource. The use of all electronic devices and networks is a privilege, not a right. Any action by a user that is determined by a system administrator to constitute an inappropriate or unauthorized use of any system or to improperly restrict or inhibit other members from using and enjoying any system is strictly prohibited and may result in terminating the user's access privileges. I further understand that any or all of the following sanctions could be imposed if any of the policies or procedures regarding the use of Oneonta City Schools technology equipment or resources, including the Internet, are violated:

- Loss of access or privileges.
- Additional disciplinary actions to be determined in line with existing practice, up to and including employment termination.
- Legal action when applicable.

Care for and Return of Equipment

I acknowledge by my signature that while I am working for Oneonta City Schools, I am expected to take proper care of company equipment and technology resources. I understand that upon termination, I am expected to return all property of Oneonta City Schools in proper working order. This agreement includes, but is not limited to, the following: laptops, Chromebooks, MacBooks, desktops, portable projectors, document cameras, iPads, eReaders, mobile phones, video and digital cameras, calculators, external hard drives, cables, charging connectors, etc. This includes any equipment purchased from school resources including classroom donations, instructional money, OFFER grant funds, etc. I understand that failure to return equipment will be considered theft by the school system and may lead to criminal prosecution.

_____   _____
Employee Signature   **Date**

_____
Grade/Subject Teaching or Job Position