

The Howard County Public School System's Computer and Internet Use Permission Form

The Howard County Public School System recognizes that the Internet shifts the ways that information may be accessed, communicated, and transferred by members of the society, and these changes may also alter instruction and student learning. The Howard County Public School System generally supports access by students to rich information resources along with the development by staff of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources.

The Internet significantly alters the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, instructional and library media materials could usually be screened--prior to use--by committees of educators and community member's intent on subjecting all such materials to reasonable selection criteria. The Internet, because it may lead to any publicly available file server in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which have not been screened by educators for use by students.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees during an information age. The Howard County Public School System expects that staff will blend thoughtful use of such information throughout the curriculum and that the staff will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources.

Students are responsible for good behavior on the Computer Network just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner.

Independent student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission forms and agreement forms signed by parents of minor students and by students themselves. Failure to submit this signed form will delay student access to computers.

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards throughout the world. The Howard County Public School System believes that the benefits to students from access in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the Howard County Public School System supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent access.

Computer Network services are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Users of the Internet must acknowledge their understanding of the guidelines as a condition for independent use of the Internet.

Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in suspension or revocation of Internet access.

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2009 – 2010 School Year

Rmf/05/12/09

Provisions

1. Acceptable uses of the Internet include activities which support learning and teaching. Internet users are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual educational needs and which take advantage of the network's functions.
2. Unacceptable uses of the network include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Violating the rights to privacy of other students.
 - b. Using profanity, obscenity, or other language which may be offensive to another user.
 - c. Copying materials in violation of copyright law.
 - d. Plagiarizing, which is the taking of someone else's words, ideas, or findings and intentionally presenting them as your own without properly giving credit to their source.
 - e. Using the network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
 - f. Attempting to degrade or disrupt system performance or unauthorized entry to and/or destruction of computer systems and files.
 - g. Re-posing personal communications without the author's prior consent.
 - h. Revealing home phone numbers, addresses, or other personal information.
 - i. Making personal purchases or unauthorized orders.
 - j. Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are sexually explicit, obscene, or that offend or tend to degrade others.
 - k. Downloading or copying information on to disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval.
3. The Howard County Public School System will be responsible for:
 - a. Teaching students about these guidelines.
 - b. Supervising and guiding student access to the Internet.
4. All users of the network are responsible for adhering to these guidelines.
5. The following people are entitled to use the Internet:
 - a. All staff
 - b. All students under the direction of a teacher during a classroom lesson
 - c. All students in grades nine through twelve independently if a permission slip has been signed and submitted by both the parent or guardian and the student.

**CUT HERE AND RETURN FULLY SIGNED LOWER PORTION TO HOMEROOM TEACHER.
RETAIN TOP PORTION AS REFERENCE FOR HCPSS COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE EXPECTATIONS.**

As a user of the Howard County Public Schools computer network, I hereby agree to use the Howard High School Network in a responsible fashion while honoring all relevant laws and restrictions. Violations could result in loss of privileges to use the Internet, Computer Network, and possible disciplinary action.

Student Signature Here: _____

Print Student's Name Here: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for this student to access the Internet independently for research while in school.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____

Print Parent/Guardian Name: _____