

Merkel ISD Responsible Use Guidelines 2023-24

This Responsible Use Guidelines policy supports Merkel Independent School District's (MISD) vision of technology use, and upholds in our users a strong sense of digital citizenship. This guideline applies to all MISD computer networks, the resources available on those networks, and all devices connected to those networks, and all activity carried out on school devices and accounts.

General Policies

- The purpose of a MISD user account is to access the MISD network and other online resources. Students and staff use these accounts to support communication and collaboration. We use technology to extend research & information fluency, to collect & analyze data, and to solve problems.
- Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility, and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges.
- MISD user accounts are owned by MISD; consequently, they are subject to the Open Records Act. MISD reserves the right to monitor and access all accounts at any time without notice in order to maintain system integrity and to ensure responsible use.
- Users should have no expectation of personal privacy in any matters stored, created, received, or sent through the MISD computer network and/or any MISD issued device. These are subject to review by MISD any time, with or without notice, with or without cause, and without the permission of the user.
- A content filtering program is in place on all MISD issued devices and accounts in order to prevent access to certain sites that may contain inappropriate material, such as pornography, weapons, illegal drugs, gambling, and any other topics deemed to be of non-educational value by MISD. This is required to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- MISD provides age-appropriate Internet safety training as a provision of the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.
- MISD is not responsible for the content accessed by users who connect via their own wireless service or device (cell phones, personal wifi, air-cards, etc.).

Responsible Use and Digital Citizenship

Technology is to be utilized in conformity with laws of the United States and the State of Texas. Accounts and devices are for school related activities only and should avoid all offensive material. Offensive material includes, but is not limited to, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material, sexual comments, inappropriate jokes, or images that would violate school policies.

Users will respect all copyright laws and refrain from copying, selling, or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher. Users will suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.

MISD policies against harassment and discrimination also apply to the use of technology. Technology will not be used to bully, harass, stalk, or tease other people or publicly defame people. Users will help maintain a safe computing environment by notifying campus officials of inappropriate behavior, vandalism, vulnerabilities, risks, and breaches of MISD policy involving campus technology. If the user is uncertain whether an activity is permitted or appropriate, he/she will ask a teacher or administrator before engaging in that activity.

Users will create online names that are appropriate and use appropriate language/content in all online posts. Users will not publish personal details or contact details for themselves or anyone else. Any audio or video recordings of students/employees should be in compliance with the student handbook. Users understand that posing as someone else is forbidden, and will not pose as a user other than themselves when online.

Users also understand that they are responsible for all activity initiated by and/or performed under their accounts. It is the user's responsibility to appropriately secure his or her account credentials. The user should also understand that it is his/her responsibility for maintaining and backing up all data.

Users may not attempt to disable, bypass, access, manipulate, or install any application or hardware on the MISD network without the consent of district administration.

DEFINITION OF DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

The following guidelines apply to all District networks, email accounts, devices connected to the District's networks, and all District-owned devices used on or off school property, whether connected to the District's network or connected through a personal data plan or other means of access.

Available technology resources:

- A District email account, including access to cloud-based (online) document storage and collaboration space (Google Apps for Education, for instance).
- District computer hardware, software, printers and instructional tools.
- District telephones, fax machines, cell phones and voicemail accounts.
- District networks, including document storage space.
- Digitized information including stored text, data files, email, digital images, video and audio files.
- Externally accessed databases (such as Internet based storage)
- Access to District-owned technology resources for use at home as deemed necessary and appropriate.
- District-filtered Internet access.
- New technologies as they become available

Bring Your Own Tools

MISD may allow staff the option to Bring Your Own Tools (BYOT) if permitted by their campus administration. Staff may use a personal device in place of (or along with) their district assigned devices if they choose. If the BYOT device is damaged or stolen while on MISD property, the user will not hold MISD liable for the replacement or repair of the device. The user will also be responsible for any data and/or SMS/MMS (texting) charges. MISD will not reimburse users for charges incurred while on BYOT devices. Additionally, MISD will not provide technical support for BYOT devices.

The BYOT user will have access to only the guest wireless service that MISD has provided. The guest wireless will be filtered by the MISD content filter when BYOT users are connected to the guest wireless service.

Consequences

Noncompliance or inappropriate use may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. Violation of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District. The user will abide by these Responsible Use Guidelines. If the user breaches this agreement or damages equipment owned by MISD, the consequences will be determined by administration. In addition, the user could face monetary charges and/or disciplinary/legal action including, but not limited to, criminal prosecution and/or penalty under appropriate state and federal laws. The Director of Technology and the campus principal will deem what is considered to be inappropriate use of the MISD computer network.

Return of Technology Resources and Records

Upon leaving employment, or upon request, employees must return any District Owned equipment or resources in possession.

Upon leaving employment, employees must return any records, written or electronic, to the District for records retention if it is believed they are retaining the sole copy of a record subject to records retention requirements. Employees must destroy (delete or shred) any other confidential records remaining in possession.

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Signature page (if not included in a single-signature handbook packet)

Staff Signature

Date

Printed Last Name

First Name