RESEARCH TRIANGLE HIGH SCHOOL
ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER USE POLICY

Privileges

Internet access is available to students and teachers at Research Triangle High School. Our educational model requires access to the large pool of data and instructional materials available through the global network; thus, its availability is not only a high priority for the school but a necessary part of the daily educational process.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. RTHS will take precautions to restrict access to such materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information.

We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school.

Responsibilities

The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that students are aware of the responsibilities they are about to acquire. Students are expected to abide by this Acceptable Computer Use Policy as well as all current local, state, and federal laws. If an RTHS student violates any of these provisions, he or she may lose any and all computer access privileges (including use for school work) for a period of time based on the severity of the violation and/or face other disciplinary consequences. Severe violations and/or violations of state or federal laws will incur more serious consequences in accordance with those policies and the law. The signatures on the Acceptable Computer Use Agreement are legally binding and indicate the parties who signed have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

Risks and Limitation of Liability

Since RTHS has no campus library or media center, the Internet serves as a powerful and essential educational tool. However, students and parents must be informed of the potential dangers that exist on the Internet, including (but not limited to) child/sexual predators, scam artists, and hate-based materials. RTHS school-based computer use policies have been developed to protect against these dangers, and student use will be monitored by school staff to enforce these policies. In addition, data that track individual student Internet activity can be made available to parents upon request. Students are hereby warned against giving out any personal information over the Internet, including physical description or photo of self, name, age, address, school attended, or any times when the student will be home alone (including after school before

parents have returned from work). Students should never meet one-on-one with someone they have met on the Internet without first seeking guidance from their teacher/advisor and parent/guardian.

Unlike home-based Internet usage which may be for entertainment and other purposes, Internet usage at RTHS is for educational purposes only. RTHS makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. RTHS reserves the right to block or filter Internet content that has no educational purpose, is obscene, contains pornography, or is harmful to minors. RTHS makes no guarantee that the functions of services provided by or through the RTHS network will be error-free or without defect. RTHS will not be responsible for any damages a user may suffer including but not limited to loss of data, delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by provider/user negligence, errors or omissions. RTHS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored in the system or network. RTHS will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. Use any information obtained via the Internet at your own risk.

RTHS Network Access—Terms and Conditions

A responsible student user of the RTHS Network

- MAY USE the Internet to research assigned classroom projects.

- MAY USE the Internet to research or develop educational materials.

- UNDERSTANDS that NONE of his or her communications and information accessible through the RTHS Network is considered private or confidential.

- UNDERSTANDS that his or her Internet activity may be tracked and monitored and made available for parental review.

- UNDERSTANDS that RTHS staff may be silently observing his or her workstation or device and network activity at any time, and may intervene in this activity at any time.

- AGREES that he or she will NEVER disclose his or her password to any other student.

- AGREES to NEVER disclose his or her personal information or private information about another person over the Internet either by posting or by disclosing this information to another person met on the Internet.

- UNDERSTANDS that security on any computer system serving many users is critical, and it is the responsibility of all users to help safeguard the integrity of the system. This responsibility includes the reporting of any potential security breach such as unauthorized or prohibited use. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the network, you must notify a teacher or an administrator.

- UNDERSTANDS that if any provision of the RTHS Acceptable Computer Use Policy is violated, the student may not be allowed to use the RTHS network and

disciplinary action may be taken. Loss of internet privileges at RTHS will have catastrophic effects on a student's educational success at school.

- UNDERSTANDS that if he or she loses the privilege of using the RTHS network, there shall be no obligation to provide a subsequent opportunity to access the network. This means that the student may receive failing grades on subsequent in-school activities requiring network access.

1) <u>School Workstation Violations:</u> A student is to leave the computer exactly as he or she finds it unless given specific permission from an instructor. Prohibited changes include, but are not limited to

1. Installing unauthorized software on any workstation or anywhere on the network.
2. Logging on as another user or allowing another individual the use of one's account or userID.
3. Stealing, vandalizing or defacing hardware (including keyboards, monitors, and headphones).
4. Not reporting computer vandalism that you are aware of.
5. Removing or replacing hardware or cables without authorization.
6. Changing the screensaver or desktop backgrounds.
7. Moving, adding, deleting, or changing icons on the desktop, including printer icons.
8. Setting themes or sounds; changing the screen resolution or tampering with operational settings including the Start menu.

2) <u>Usage Violations:</u> Use of the computer must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of RTHS. *The student is responsible, at all times, for its proper use.* Improper use of the RTHS network is prohibited. Uses of the RTHS network that are prohibited include, but are not limited to

1. Use of RTHS technologies in support of any illegal purposes.
2. Intentionally uploading, creating, or spreading computer viruses or worms.
3. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to the RTHS network, or any other network, or to any secure data is considered hacking activity and thus is prohibited. Hacking activity includes students attempting to logon to the network/Internet as a faculty member or an administrator.
4. Possessing and/or using or attempting to use hacking tools, including keystroke loggers and password/encryption tools.
5. Not reporting network security violations or potential violations that you are aware of. If you become aware of a problem, do not demonstrate the problem to other users.
6. Downloading and storing files when logged in as another user or attempting to subvert the authorization checks surrounding network/computer resources.

7. Connecting unauthorized devices to the RTHS network without advance permission.

8. Providing access to the RTHS network to unauthorized individuals via one's own account, another's account, or otherwise.

9. Using profanity, obscenity or language that is considered offensive or threatening to persons of a particular race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or to persons with disabilities. This includes retrieving, viewing, producing, posting, or sending (or attempting to post or send) material that

   • is profane, obscene, lewd, sexually explicit or suggestive or pornographic in purpose.

   • advocates or engages in illegal acts, threats, hate or violence.

   • potentially disrupts, causes damage, threatens or endangers students or staff.

   North Carolina laws do not except minors from prosecution in the area concerning email or texting of explicit images. So-called "sexting" may result in criminal prosecution and registration as a sex offender.

10. Spamming: Distributing mass e-mail messages and chain letters or sending e-mail to school address lists or other large numbers of people or a large volume of messages to one or more individuals for the purpose of causing annoyance.

11. Posting personal or private information about yourself or other people on the Internet. Violating any aspect of a student's right to privacy by disclosing confidential information including but not limited to a student's grades or test scores.

12. Posting, sending, or disclosing over the Internet information that insults, defames, or harasses.

13. "Re-posting" or forwarding personal communications without the author's prior consent.

14. Chat rooms and instant messaging are off-limits during school hours except with prior specific permission. Arranging or agreeing to meet with a person you have met online without specific advance permission from a parent or teacher is prohibited.

15. Using RTHS technology to copy commercial software in violation of state, federal, or international copyright laws.

16. Using the RTHS network for financial gain or for the transaction of any business, commercial or lobbying activities.

17. Using technology to cheat; to misrepresent another's work as one's own or to pass one's work on to another for the purpose of cheating.

18. Plagiarizing (claiming another person's writings as your own) any information gained on or through the network or from the Internet. (This includes the downloading of reports or term papers purchased on the Internet and passing them off as one's own). Be aware that RTHS has implemented software that identifies plagiarized copy purchased by students over the Internet. NEVER SUBMIT ANY WORK THAT IS NOT YOUR OWN without proper attribution.

3) <u>Conduct Violations</u>: The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges and severe disciplinary action. The school administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, based on the explicit and implicit guidelines in the Acceptance Computer Use Policy.

1. You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
   - Do not be rude or abusive in your messages to others.
   - Use only appropriate language. Do not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate or offensive language.

2. Using technology for off-task activities during class (playing games, videos, music, or visiting websites not instructionally related) is prohibited.

3. You may not visit chat rooms, bulletin boards, newsgroups or translator services at any time during class without your instructor's permission.

4. You must log-off and clean up your workstation before you leave.

5. You must report any unsolicited or inappropriate web site that pops up on your screen without your consent to your teacher.

6. If you experience any problems with your device (you can't log on, you can't print, you can't get on the network or to the Internet, your memory tool is stuck, etc.), you must report these problems to your teacher/advisor, an administrator, or the IT staff.

7. It is your responsibility to keep your password confidential. IF YOUR PASSWORD IS COMPROMISED, YOU MUST CHANGE IT IMMEDIATELY! If you forget your password, see your teacher or advisor who will help you create a new password. Choose a password you can easily remember. Your password must follow specific guidelines for a secure password. It must contain at least six characters. It must also include 3 of the 4 following items: Uppercase letter, Lowercase letter, Symbol, and Number. It may not contain all or part of your username. During the year, you will be required to change your password every 90 days to ensure the security of your account and your data. You may not use any previous passwords. You will be notified when your password is about to expire.

<u>Consequences for Violations of Terms and Conditions</u>

Workstation and Usage Violations such as those listed above are SERIOUS violations with SEVERE consequences. Workstation and Usage violations can incur suspension of computer privileges as well as disciplinary action and notification of a student's parents. Reinstatement will require parental signature and/or conference.

Conduct Violations also have the consequence of disciplinary action which may include suspension of computer privileges. Repeated conduct violations will be treated as a serious violation (see above) and parents will be notified.

Academic Consequences of Violations

Violations of the Acceptable Computer Use Agreement may carry serious academic consequences. If you lose your computer privileges, you may not use ANY RTHS computer. You may NOT bring a personal laptop to school to use for the duration of the violation. If you have access to the necessary hardware/software at home, you may complete computer-related assignments at home. Otherwise, you must complete your assignment at a public library or some other public computing facility. You may propose alternate, non-technology assignments to your teachers. Your teachers will decide whether your proposal constitutes an acceptable alternative for meeting the learning objectives of the original computer-based assignment. If there are no valid alternatives in computer-based courses, the result may be that you would fail the assignment.

The following applies to all violations:

1. If the school year ends before the computer suspension, the remainder of the suspension will carry over to the next school year.

2. Acts of vandalism, abuse or negligence that require the replacement of equipment will require financial recompense by the student or the student's parents. (See below)

3. Any violation of this agreement may result in additional disciplinary action in accordance with school policies, local, state and federal laws.

Damage/Replacement Fees

RTHS has implemented a consistent replacement-cost structure for damaged/lost school-provided laptops and chargers. In cases where items are not returned to RTHS or when items are returned broken, the following replacement/repair fees will be assessed (similar to lost or damaged library books):

- Power Charger: $20
- Battery: $25
- Keyboard: $15
- Touchpad: $15
- Screen: $50
- Hard Drive: $75
- Entire Laptop: $175