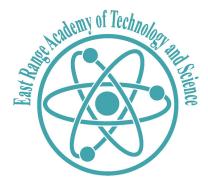Board Policy
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Internet and Educational Network
Safety and Acceptable Use

Adopted: February 2021

I.   PURPOSE

East Range Academy of Technology and Science offers a computer network with internet access for students, teachers, and staff. The network and other technological resources provide opportunities to enhance instruction, appeal to different learning styles, and meet the educational goals of East Range Academy.

II.   POLICY STATEMENT

A. This policy applies to all students and employees (including teachers, administrators, and support staff) as well as any other users who are expressly authorized by ERATS to use school technological resources, including, but not limited to, board members, contractors, consultants, and temporary workers.

B. ERATS' technological resources include, but are not limited to, computers and tablets, interactive whiteboards, mobile devices, websites, networks, servers, the internet, phones, copiers, printers, fax machines, televisions and video-recorders, computer cameras, e-mail accounts, and licensed software.

C. Acceptable uses of technological resources are limited to activities that support learning and teaching, except when otherwise specifically authorized by ERATS in the best interest of the school. Use of technological resources should be integrated into the educational program.

D. **Use of ERATS' technological resources and access to the use of the internet in school are a privilege and not a right.** Misuse of the system will subject the staff member or student to discipline which will depend on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations. Discipline for students will be in accordance with the ERATS Student Discipline Policy and school rules and may include:

1. Suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges;
2. Requiring payment for damages and repairs; and
3. Civil or criminal liability under applicable laws.

E. All staff are expected to use technological resources and participate in the necessary training for the proper performance of their duties.

F. ERATS will provide instruction to students regarding the proper use of technological resources including, but not limited to:

1. Appropriately interacting with others on social media;
2. Appropriately interacting with others in chat rooms;
3. Appropriately posting information on the internet or on individual websites;
4. Appropriate use and limitation of free speech on the internet;
5. Cyberbullying prohibition, awareness of signs of cyberbullying behavior and assistance from ERATS and elsewhere to students who believe themselves or others to be targets of cyberbullying; and
6. Appropriate use of copyrighted and non-copyrighted material found on the Internet.

III.   GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE USE

A. ERATS technological resources are provided for school-related authorized purposes only. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient and legal activities that support teaching and learning. Use of school system technological resources for commerce or profit or for amusement or entertainment is prohibited. ERATS technological resources shall not be used for charitable endeavors without prior approval of the director or their designee. ERATS technological resources shall not be used for political purposes.

B. Under no circumstance may software purchased by ERATS be copied for personal use. Users must obtain permission from the technology department prior to copying or loading ERATS-owned software onto any computer, whether the computer is privately owned or is an ERATS computer.

C. Students and employees must comply with all ERATS policies, administrative regulations, and school standards and rules in using technological resources. All applicable laws, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records, apply to technological resource use. Any use that violates state or federal law is strictly prohibited. All rules of the Discipline Policy apply to students' use of the internet and other technological resources.

D. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally accessing, downloading, storing, printing or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing, abusive or considered to be harmful to minors.

E. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).

F. Users must respect the privacy of others. When using e-mail, blogs or other forms of electronic communication, students must not reveal personally identifiable, private or confidential information, such as the home address, telephone number, credit or checking account information or social security number of themselves or fellow students. In addition,

school employees will follow the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. Chap. 13 and/or ERATS Policy 502: Student Educational Data when publishing student information. School employees will follow the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and ERATS Policy 403: Public and Private Personnel Data when publishing employee data. Users also may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.

G. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks and/or data of anyone connected to the server or the internet. Users may not waste computer resources. Users may not knowingly or negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance. The technology department provides layers of network and device protection which may include antivirus software on all ERATS owned or leased computers. Users must not disable any antivirus programs from running on those computers.

H. Users may not create, download, or introduce entertainment software, games, network communications programs or any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device or network without the express permission of the school's director or their designee. This prohibition pertains to freeware, shareware, copyrighted commercial and non-commercial software, web browser extensions, and all other forms of software and files not directly related to the instructional and administrative purposes of ERATS.

I. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as "hacking" or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems or accounts.

J. Users are prohibited from using another individual's computer account. Users may not read, alter, change, block, execute or delete files or communications belonging to another user without appropriate authorization or the owner's express prior permission. In addition, employees shall not share or reveal their passwords or user IDs for any data system. All employees are responsible for safeguarding their user IDs and passwords.

K. If a user identifies a security problem on a technological resource, the user must immediately notify a supervisor or the ERATS technology liaison without demonstrating the problem to other users. Unauthorized attempts to log onto any ERATS computer or the ERATS network as a system administrator may result in cancellation of user privileges and/or additional disciplinary action. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.

L. Views may be expressed as representing the view of ERATS or part of ERATS only with prior approval by the school's director or their designee.

M. ERATS technological resources may not be used to interfere with or disrupt other users, services, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer viruses, distribution of large quantities of information that may overwhelm the system, posting personal or private information about the user or other people on the internet, arranging or agreeing to meet with someone the user has met

online for purposes other than official school business, posting information that could be disrupting, cause damage, or endanger students or staff, and accessing chat rooms or instant messaging software, unless for a valid educational purpose or official school business.

N. Using ERATS computers for illegal, harassing, or inappropriate purposes, or in support of such activities, is prohibited. Illegal activities are any violations of federal, state, or local laws and include, but are not limited to, copyright infringement and/or illegal file sharing, committing fraud, threatening another person, or intentionally engaging in communications for the purpose of abusing, annoying, threatening, terrifying, harassing, or embarrassing another person. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, comments, jokes, innuendoes, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, visual depictions, pranks, or verbal conduct relating to an individual that (1) have the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (2) have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance; or (3) interfere with school operations. Inappropriate use is any violation of other provisions of this policy and includes, but is not limited to, using another person's ID or password, plagiarizing; accessing, producing, storing, posting, sending, displaying, or viewing inappropriate or offensive material, including pornographic, obscene, discriminatory, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually suggestive language or images, or images of exposed private body parts, and accessing material advocating illegal acts of violence, including hate literature.

IV. INTERNET SAFETY

ERATS is aware that there is information on the internet that is not related to the educational program. ERATS also is aware that the internet may provide information and opportunities to communicate on subjects that are not suitable for high-school students and that many parents would find objectionable. ERATS personnel must take reasonable precautions to prevent students from having access to inappropriate materials, such as violence, nudity, obscenity or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate educational purpose. The director or designee shall ensure that the internet service provider or technology personnel have installed a technology protection measure that blocks or filters internet access to audio or visual depictions that are obscene, that are considered pornography or that are harmful to minors. Employees may have a different level of blocks or filters based on ERATS guidelines.

V. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

ERATS does not relinquish control over the material on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the ERATS network.

A. Routine maintenance and monitoring may lead to a discovery of violation of this policy, another ERATS policy, or the law.

B. An individual search or investigation will be conducted if ERATS administrators or board members have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or ERATS policy.

C. Parents have a right, at any time, to review or investigate the contents of their child's files and email files.

D. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.

E. ERATS employees and other staff should be aware ERATS retains the right, at any time, to investigate or review the contents of their files or email files.

F. ERATS reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action based upon the user's inappropriate or illegal use of technological resources or use that is in violation of this policy. **Information in electronic messages is not anonymous** and may be subject to disclosure to third parties under state and/or federal law in certain circumstances.

VI. LIMITATION OF SCHOOL LIABILITY

Use of any ERATS system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage, or unavailability of data stored on school hard drives, servers, or flash drives and related storage media; or for delays, changes-in, or interruptions of service; or misdeliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school's system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school's system or the internet.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND ANNUAL REVIEW

A. The director or designee is authorized to promulgate administrative procedures to implement this policy.

B. ERATS will inform parents of the individual student's responsibility to use technological resources in an ethical and educationally appropriate manner.

C. The ERATS School Board will conduct an **annual review** of this policy due to rapid changes in the development of the internet and other technology.

Legal References: 15 U.S.C. §6501, et. seq. (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)
47 U.S.C. §254 (Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000)
Minn. Stat. §125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)
Minn. Stat. §125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)