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*MSBA/MASA Model Policy 441*

*Orig. 1995*

*Rev. 2002*

*Beacon Academy Dist. #4124*

## **Beacon Academy**

### **Policy #441**

#### **USE OF INTERNET, EMAIL, COMPUTERS, VOICEMAIL AND OTHER ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS BY BEACON ACADEMY EMPLOYEES**

##### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set the policies and guidelines for the school district computer system. This includes acceptable and safe use of the internet, including electronic communications by staff.

##### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

In making decisions regarding the employee access to the school district computer system and the internet, including electronic communications, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world.

The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use. Users are expected to use internet access through the district system to further educational and professional goals consistent with the mission of the school district and its policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on the district limited-purpose network.

Use of the district's network/internet resources is intended only for educational purposes such as: research, professional development, instruction, collaborative education projects, and dissemination of district information. Use of network/internet resources must support the curriculum and enhance student learning opportunities and/or support accurate and appropriate communication of district information. School Board Policy 409 "Employee Publications, Instructional Materials, Inventions

and Creations” prescribes the identification process for instructional materials, including electronic sources.

Use of the districts network/internet resources for personal gain or profit is not permitted. Personal web and/or email servers may not reside on the districts network.

### **III. EMAIL SYSTEM**

The primary purpose of the email system is to facilitate timely communications with Beacon Academy staff, students, families and other business associates of Beacon Academy. All aspects of the email system, including software, passwords and the contents of the email messages themselves are the property of Beacon Academy. All data files, email messages and other information contained in the system belong to Beacon Academy. All work produced using the system is the property of Beacon Academy.

### **IV. BEACON ACADEMY’S PROPERTY**

All work product, whether on paper, voicemail or electronic, is the property of Beacon Academy and constitutes business and educational records of Beacon Academy. These records may be audited by government agencies, subpoenaed into court or disclosed pursuant to state or federal law, and should reflect the professionalism of Beacon Academy and the employee.

### **V. ACCESS AND MONITORING**

Beacon Academy has the right to access each employee’s computer, computer files, disks and to intercept, monitor and review all email messages which are received by or distributed from any Beacon Academy-owned computer. Email messages that have been deleted from workstation computers may remain in back-up in the custody of Beacon Academy. Email and other electronic documents may be subpoenaed or requested for disclosure pursuant to state and/or federal law just like paper documents.

Improper use of the email system, including the use of profanity, vulgarity and off-color comments, or the receipt, distribution or duplication of any document which contains materials considered offensive or harassing, is not permitted by Beacon Academy policy. Care should be taken that the quality of all email correspondence meets the same professional standards as other written correspondence. Format, spelling and conciseness are just as important with email as other forms of communication.

## **VI. ANTI-HARASSMENT AND INAPPROPRIATE USE**

Voicemail, email or computer files containing foul or offensive language, sexual content, and racial, ethnic, religious or other discriminatory slurs are prohibited. Employees may not use the computer or other communication systems to solicit or proselytize for religious, charitable, commercial or political purposes.

## **VII. LICENSED SOFTWARE**

Only legally licensed software may be used on the systems. Beacon Academy does not own all software or its related documentation, and, unless authorized by the software vendor or developer, does not have the right to reproduce either the software or its documentation. All software must be used in accordance with the software license agreement. Employees must not make, acquire, install or use unauthorized copies of computer software in connection with their employment or their use of Beacon Academy systems, including Beacon Academy's files and data.

## **VIII. INTERNET ACCESS**

The purpose of Internet access provided by Beacon Academy is to access information directly related to the business of Beacon Academy. In compliance with the law, Beacon Academy may install software which limits or disallows access to Web sites which are deemed inappropriate and/or unrelated to Beacon Academy business. In addition, Beacon Academy may install software which tracks each employee's activity on the Internet and maintain this log for as long as is deemed necessary. The unauthorized use, installation, copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create the material, does not own the rights to it, or has not received authorization for its use, it should not be on the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights. Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression. Improper use of the Internet, including accessing sites for non-business or non-educational (personal) purposes; accessing sites which use profanity, vulgarity and off-color language; or accessing sites which contain materials considered offensive or harassing, is not permitted.

## **IX. PERSONAL USE EXCEPTIONS MAY BE GRANTED**

Personal use of email or the Internet is generally not allowed. Brief and occasional personal use of the electronic mail system or the Internet is acceptable as long as it is

not excessive or inappropriate, occurs during personal time (lunch or other breaks), and does not result in expense or harm to Beacon Academy or otherwise violate this policy.

## **X. SECURITY**

The computer and network systems - and the data on those systems - are critical to the conduct of Beacon Academy's business. Security of those systems and data is a responsibility of all employees. Therefore, employees should not disclose anyone's password (including their own) or enable unauthorized third parties to have access to or use the system, or in any way jeopardize the security of the systems. Employees should notify their supervisor upon observing or learning of any violation of this policy.

## **IX. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The use of the school district system and access to the internet including electronic communications is a privilege, not a right, used with- in District Policy 441.

**Legal References:** 15 U.S.C. §6501 *et seq.* (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)  
17 U.S.C. §101 *et seq.* (Copyrights)  
20 U.S.C. §6751 *et seq.* (Enhancing Education through Technology Act of 2001)  
47 U.S.C. §254 (Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA))  
47 C.F.R. §54.520 (FCC rules implementing CIPA)  
Minn. Stat. §125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)  
Minn. Stat. §125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)  
*Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cnty. Sch. Dist.*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)  
*United States v. American Library Association*, 539 U.S. 194 (2003)  
*Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist.*, 412 F.Supp. 2d 502 (2006)  
*J.S. v. Bethlehem Area Sch. Dist.*, 807 A.2d 847 (Pa. 2002)