

Internet Safety Policy

NETWORK/INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

Background

The Provident Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes that telecommunications and other new technologies have changed the ways through which information may be accessed, communicated, transferred and exchanged by members of society. Those changes will also affect student instruction and learning. The Board is committed to the effective use of technology as a tool to advance Provident's educational program and curriculum and to enhance the quality of student learning, as well as to promote the efficiency of Provident operations. The school's electronic communications system ("Network") will provide unprecedented opportunities for students and staff to communicate, learn, access, exchange and publish information. The resources available through this Network, and the electronic communication and information research skills that students will develop using it, are of significant and growing importance in the learning process and preparation of students for success in the future. The Network includes the Internet, which is a global information and communication network that provides a tremendous opportunity to bring previously unimaginable education and information opportunities to our students. The Internet is, however, a public space. As is true with all public spaces, there is a potential that students may come in contact with potentially harmful or inappropriate material or people through the Internet. Therefore, use of the Internet by students necessarily raises concerns about student safety and security. Provident will provide guidance to help students learn to use the Internet in a safe and responsible manner. The Board believes that the advantages to students and staff from access to the valuable information and interaction available on the Network (including the Internet) outweigh the risk that users may misuse the Network for purposes which are inconsistent with the curriculum and educational goals of Provident. The Board further believes that these risks can be reduced through the adoption of this policy and related procedures. In addition, the Board developed this Policy to be in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Definitions

The term "Network" shall be interpreted to include any and all Provident owned computers, servers, any hardware or software, the School's local area network (LAN), all wireless access points, the Internet, Internet 2, the School Intranet, self-contained electronic mail systems, and any other elements of the School's computer, telecommunications or electronic communication/information systems.

“Network” shall include Provident issued Google accounts to students, teachers and administrators (Drive, Gmail, Docs, Sites, Apps, Chromebooks and Courseware), and other similar collaborative programs and software adopted by Provident.

Objective

To provide for and establish a reasonable and equitable policy for use of the Network by students and staff and for development of applicable rules and regulations regarding the acceptable use of the Network as a tool to support and advance Provident’s educational program, curriculum and internal operations and, at the same time, to promote a policy of Internet safety.

A. Acceptable Network Use

The Network may be used only as a tool to support and advance the functions of Provident as well as its curriculum and educational programs. Access to Provident’s Network is a privilege and not a right. Users of the Network are responsible for their behavior and communications over the Network and access to Network services will be provided only to those staff and students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and in accordance with Provident’s rules and regulations as may be adopted and amended from time to time.

Students may use the Network only in support of educational activities consistent with the educational objectives of Provident. Faculty and staff may use the Network primarily in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of Provident. Faculty and staff may access the Network for limited personal use but not for any commercial or business use; however, such personal use may not violate any applicable rules and regulations or applicable administrative procedures or interfere with job performance. Use of the Network must be in compliance with applicable laws, including all copyright laws, and all materials on the Network should be presumed to be copyrighted.

Staff or students who claim that this policy is denying them access to material that is not within the prohibitions of this policy shall direct their claim, in writing, to CEO or his/her designee, who shall review the matter and respond promptly.

B. Inappropriate Use and Activities

Provident reserves the absolute right to define inappropriate behavior or improper use of the Network, adopt rules and regulations applicable to Network use, determine whether an activity constitutes inappropriate use of the Network, and determine the consequence of such inappropriate use. Inappropriate network use shall include (but not be limited to) obscene, pornographic or offensive matter; vulgarity, harassment, intimidation, insult or ridicule of another; damage or waste of property; use of another’s password or misrepresenting one’s identity; “hacking” and other illegal online activity; unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding

minors; use for commercial purposes or illegal purposes, or any other use deemed inappropriate by Provident, or in violation of any other Provident policy, administrative procedure, law, regulation or code of conduct. Inappropriate use of the Network may, for students, result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school or, for employees, suspension or termination of employment. Where circumstances warrant, inappropriate use of the Network may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

C. Protection and Filtering

Provident shall employ appropriate technology protection measures with respect to the use of the Internet by students. Provident will use software programs and select online servers that are designed to block or filter access to visual depictions that are (among other inappropriate things) obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors. In addition, the filtering equipment will be used to ensure that the Network may not be used to access, use, disclose or disseminate personal identification information regarding students or staff as well as to screen out inappropriate text.

Provident will endeavor to keep the blocking and filtering technology up-to-date, but it is not possible to guarantee that all inappropriate content will be successfully blocked or filtered. Provident shall educate students and employees about appropriate/inappropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and chat clients as well as cyberbullying awareness. Proper safety procedures, as deemed appropriate by the applicable administrator will be provided to ensure compliance with the CIPA.

In addition to the use of technology protection measures, the monitoring of online activities and access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet may include, but not be limited to, the following guidelines:

1. Ensuring the presence of a teacher or other appropriate Provident personnel when students are accessing the Internet;
2. Monitoring logs of access in order to keep track of the web sites visited by students as a measure to restrict access to materials harmful to minors; and
3. Unauthorized access (including so-called "hacking") and other unlawful activities by minors are prohibited by Provident; and student violations of such policies may result in disciplinary action.
4. Ownership and Retention

Any and all material or information placed in any file on the Network becomes Provident property. Provident reserves the right to indefinitely store and access any such material or information on the Network, including personal and electronic mail files, and to dispose of any material or information contained therein without prior notice. Provident further reserves the right to monitor online activities and review, record or log Network

use. Provident also reserves the right to limit content of Provident websites to school-approved information related to Provident curriculum and programs.

Administrative Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to develop and publish written administrative procedures and/or guidelines for the implementation of this policy, including taking steps related to: (i) rules and regulations for appropriate Network use; (ii) website access and website links; (iii) security measures including password procedures; (iv) measures designed to restrict access to harmful or inappropriate matter on the Internet; (v) procedures for promoting the safety and security of students when using electronic mail; and (vi) prevention of unauthorized access and any other matter deemed necessary or advisable to implement this policy.

Communication

This policy shall be communicated to:

1. All Provident Staff
2. Students and Parents