

## LITCHFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

**POLICY CODE: IIAE**

**APPROVAL: March 4, 2020**

### **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY / ELECTRONIC MEDIA ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

For purposes of this policy, the terms “users” refers to Litchfield School District employees, students, contracted service personnel, community members, guests, organizations and volunteers in the District.

It is the responsibility of all Litchfield School District users to familiarize themselves with and abide by the rules of this policy, the Student Handbook and all other applicable school policies. The Litchfield School District encourages the use of digital technology and electronic media for completing educational assignments and professional responsibilities. The primary purpose of providing access to technology within the District is to support the educational goals and objectives outlined in the Litchfield School District Strategic Plan. The following acceptable use policy applies to all users who use the District’s media/technology. Any violation of the terms may result in loss of access to the District’s technology and/or disciplinary/legal action.

#### ***I. Introduction***

Pursuant to New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 194:3-d, this AUP shall serve as a statement on the appropriate use of the various technology and media available to all authorized users of the Litchfield School District including, but not limited to, the Litchfield School District computers, network, tablets, phones, e- mail, website and Internet access. It is the Litchfield School District’s goal to enhance educational excellence with the assistance of these technology resources. It is expected that all digital technology users will respect the rights of others, and will act in a way that reflects proper ethical and legal standards at all times.

#### ***A. The Internet***

The Internet is a vast information network that links individuals, computers, networks and databases throughout the world. The Internet has the potential to serve as an invaluable resource because it allows immediate access to and download of educational materials found at universities and colleges, government agencies and departments, non-profit organizations, private businesses and companies, and even private residences. All users should be aware that the Internet’s power to access limitless resources also includes information or material that lacks educational value and can be inaccurate, controversial, objectionable, offensive, defamatory and even illegal. The Litchfield School District does not condone the use of such materials at any time and prohibits the use of the Litchfield School District technology resources for these purposes.

The Litchfield School District uses technology protection that blocks or filters Internet access to some Internet sites that are not in accordance with District policy. The technology protection may be disabled by the Network Administrator upon request from staff for research purposes to access a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked by the technology protection. The Network Administrator will monitor use of the Internet to ensure enforcement of the policy yet, it is impossible for the District or any district staff member to adequately filter or control the quality or content of the information available on the Internet while still retaining a meaningful connection to it. Therefore, all users will be held responsible for ensuring that their activities adhere to the District’s AUP and to generally acceptable educational standards as outlined in other applicable district policies.

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The Internet also provides interactive communication technologies, such as e-mail, news groups, list servers, instant chat rooms, podcasts, wikis, blogs and discussion groups, which hold great potential for the learning process, but are also very disruptive if improperly utilized. All users and groups using Litchfield School District Internet access to participate in these interactive technologies without an educational purpose will be subject to disciplinary action.

Internet access can serve as a means for improving, extending and enriching teaching and learning in the Litchfield School District. Thus, the Litchfield School District firmly believes that the educational benefits to staff and students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration or interaction, far exceed the disadvantages.

### ***B. Litchfield School District Web Presence***

The Litchfield School District's presence on the Internet was established to communicate the happenings of the Litchfield School District with staff, students, parents, community members and the world. The District's Website ([www.litchfieldsd.org](http://www.litchfieldsd.org)), affiliated social media accounts, including non-official social media accounts which are branded to represent the district, are intended to convey general information about the District's schools, events, curricula or programs of study, and policies and procedures. All information or material must be professional, ethical and meet the standards required of other district publications. As such, it is not a forum to express public and personal opinions not representative of the District or for regularly hosting or promoting publications for non-Litchfield School District events or organizations. The District uniformly prohibits unauthorized hyperlinks, expression of public or personal opinions, or inappropriate pictures or materials from its website or social media presence. Any unauthorized hyperlink, expression of public or personal opinions, or inappropriate pictures or materials posted to the School District's website or social media accounts is a violation of this policy, and subject to disciplinary action.

**All users** understand that this Acceptable Use Policy Agreement Form is a contract. As part of this contract, the Litchfield School District reserves the right to at any time, without advance notice to **all users** to monitor, access, modify, remove, review, and/or retrieve the subject, content, and appropriateness of any and all information stored or transmitted on the District's sections of the Litchfield School District Website, affiliated social media accounts, including non-official social media accounts which are branded to represent the district, hyperlinks or web pages. In order to maintain the safety of the Litchfield School District students, student work or materials, pictures of students, and any such other information that would allow for the identification of students, will only be allowed after the receipt of written permission from students and their parent(s) or guardian(s). All information about students posted will comply with the District's policy on student records, the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, and any other applicable state or federal law.

The creator of any District web page is responsible for ensuring that the information contained therein is of the highest editorial standard (spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, et cetera). The information should be factually accurate and current. If errors are observed, the Director of Technology, principal or designated school personnel should be contacted to make the necessary corrections.

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All teacher and staff professional websites, affiliated social media accounts, including non-official social media accounts which are branded to represent the district, must reflect the high educational standards of the Litchfield School District. There may be no links from a teacher's or staff member's professional website to his or her personal website or to other websites of a non-educational nature except with permission from the Building Principal, the Director of Technology, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

All links from a School's website to sites outside the Litchfield School District network must be approved by the Director of Technology, the Building Principal or his/her designee. At all times, there must be a good faith effort to verify the authenticity of material posted on the District's websites.

### ***II. Definition and Purpose***

"Digital Technology" is any device that creates, transmits, or accesses digital information, whether connected to the network or used in a stand-alone situation. "Digital information" or "Electronic Media" is any data created, transmitted, or accessed by digital technology.

"Educational" refers to the process of teaching and learning that is tied to the curriculum of the Litchfield School District or the Common Core State Standards.

The Litchfield Public Schools provides access to its data network and Internet portal (the "network") to **all users**. This network includes all hardware used to deliver and receive data, as well as all software instrumental in viewing and working with data over the network. Any computer – **whether purchased by the District or owned by the individual** – that is connected to our network at any time is considered part of the network and, thus, is subject to the terms of the Litchfield School District Digital Technology/ Electronic Media Acceptable Use Policy.

### ***III. District Limitation of Liability***

The Litchfield School District makes no warranties of any kind; either expressed or implied that the functions or the services provided by or through its network will be error free or without defect, and will not be responsible for any damages users may suffer, including but not limited to; loss of data or interruptions in service, personal, physical, psychological and/or monetary damages of any kind.

The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network.

The District will not be responsible for a user's unauthorized financial obligations arising through the use of the network.

### ***IV. Due Process***

While on the network, the user agrees to take full responsibility – legal, financial or otherwise - for his or her actions. The Litchfield School District will not be held liable for the actions of anyone connecting through our network. Violations of the AUP can carry serious consequences and could result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges.

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The Administration and/or the town, county, state or federal authorities may take further disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation. These disciplinary actions may include suspension/termination of employment or student disciplinary action which may result in suspension or expulsion.

Any questions, suspicions, or allegations concerning adherence to the Digital Technology/Electronic Media Acceptable Use Policy should be brought to the attention of the Director of Technology, Building Principal, or the Superintendent of Schools.

### ***V. Search and Seizure***

The network and all district-owned computers and storage systems, whether attached to the network or not, are subject to inspection by the administration at any time. System users should expect limited privacy regarding the contents of their files stored on the network. An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a user has violated the AUP or the law. The nature of the investigation will be in relation to the context and the nature of the alleged violation. An individual search may be conducted at any time.

### ***VI. Privilege and Responsibilities***

The use of the Litchfield School District technology resources is a privilege and not a right. The Litchfield School District technology resources are only provided for educational purposes to **all users**, and shall not constitute a public forum. The Litchfield School District technology resources are provided for **all users** to conduct research, gather information and communicate with others for educational purposes. The Litchfield School District technology resources shall not be utilized for personal, commercial or other non- educational purposes.

General school rules for behavior and communications apply to **all users** when using the Litchfield School District technology resources as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Acknowledging that the potential for abuse of network resources exists, **all users** and (parents/guardians of those who are minors) must sign the Litchfield School District AUP Agreement Form prior to accessing the Litchfield School District technology resources. All **users** and (parents/guardians of who are minors) shall assume full liability, whether legal, financial or otherwise, for prohibited actions when using the Litchfield School District technology resources. Similarly, outside of school, parents and guardians bear responsibility for the appropriate guidance of their children on the Internet.

Prohibited use of district technology resources, includes, but is not limited to:

- Interfering with the normal and proper operation of the Litchfield School District computers, network, e-mail system, website or Internet access;
- Use of the Litchfield School Districts' digital technology to defame, slander or libel any person; sending hate mail, anonymous messages or threatening messages;

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- Cyberbullying using electronic technology which includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chats, and websites and/or assumes the identity of another person, by conducting themselves in ways that are deliberately or indirectly harmful to others (see [JICDD, Student Conduct, Cyber- Bullying](#));
- Using the technology resources for illegal purposes, *such as* “hacking” attempts or attempts to otherwise compromise system security;
- Using the technology resources for commercial, financial and/or personal gain, including solicitation and business of any nature, such as any personal marketing material;
- Using the technology to store personal data, such as family photos, videos, or other non-work related material;
- Using personal devices to access and download covered information; such as student IEP’s, 504 plans, and other documents as outlined in Litchfield School District’s Data Security and Privacy Governance Manual;
- Using the technology resources for political lobbying, except as expressly allowed, during a school activity;
- Using the technology resources for promoting, supporting or celebrating religion or religious institutions;
- Using electronic mail, chat rooms or other forms of direct electronic communication in an unsupervised environment;
- Disclosing personal information outside of the school network other than to access school approved educational resources;
- Changing files that do not belong to the user;
- Storing or transferring unnecessarily large files or attempting to install any software on the computers;
- Using profanity, vulgarity, obscenity or other language which tends to be offensive or tends to degrade others, including harassing, racial, sexist or discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors;
- Accessing, viewing, storing or transferring profanity, vulgarity, obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic materials;
- Creating, transferring or otherwise using any text, image, movie or sound recording that contains pornography, profanity, obscenity or language that offends or tends to degrade others;
- Sharing personal passwords or personal information with other;
- Leaving personal files open or leaving computer sessions unattended;
- Using invasive software such as “viruses”, “worms” and other detrimental activities, encryption or security measures to avoid monitoring or review in the ordinary course of business or routine maintenance by the system administrator or District staff;
- Attempting to log-on to the network as the system administrator;
- Attempting to log-on to the network as another user or give access to an unauthorized user;
- Intentionally infringing upon the intellectual property rights of others in computer programs or electronic information, including plagiarism and/or unauthorized use or reproduction, using software or hardware to illegally obtain copyrighted material such a “stream-ripping” from YouTube or other media websites;
- Transferring, utilizing or storing material in violation of copyright laws or license agreements;
- Involvement in any activity prohibited by law or School District policy;

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- Creating hyperlinks between the Litchfield School District sections of the Litchfield Website and other Internet sites;
- Off school premises computer use, web page creation and Internet access for the purpose of disrupting the learning process by any of the means listed above.

Students are expected to immediately notify a parent or guardian, classroom teacher, principal or appropriate District employee if others are trying to contact them for unlawful or suspicious activities.

Use of the District's technology resources for any altruistic or charitable purpose must be approved in advance by the District. The Litchfield School District reserves the right to add and include additional behaviors and activities that can result in appropriate disciplinary action.

### **VII. E-mail**

All e-mail created by an employee of a government unit is a public record. Any member of the public may request copies of e-mail. Please note that even deleted messages are subject to disclosure because they are required to be backed up in our archives.

Users should consider e-mail messages to be equivalent to letters sent on official letterhead and therefore should be written in a professional and courteous tone. Tone is often difficult to discern in electronic communication and thus should not be regarded as a replacement for face to face communication.

Faculty, staff, or students must not subscribe to mass electronic mailings (e.g. "chain letters", "jokes of the day", "horoscopes", "trivia", coupon alerts, non-educational discount emails, et cetera). Mass mailings take up valuable network space that should be used for educational purposes. If a faculty member joins a professional (educational) listserv, it is requested that he/she subscribe in digest form. District provided email shall not be used for personal banking, health-care, lottery, dating, or other personal bills, utilities, or shopping.

Students are not allowed to access non-school email accounts, including chat and instant messaging. In the event that students are given e-mail accounts through the Litchfield School District, all e-mail rules stated in this AUP apply.

Email accounts issued by the Litchfield School District may not be used to bully, harass, or threaten an individual or organization; accounts will not be used to send chain letters, viruses, or hoaxes to other students, faculty, or individuals. (see [JICDD](#), [Student Conduct](#), [Cyber-Bullying](#))

**All user** email accounts are filtered for language and content; any email that contains inappropriate language or content will not be delivered and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation.

### **VIII. Intentional Violations**

The District is aware that violations of this policy may occur under circumstances where **users** are involuntarily routed to sites containing inappropriate information or material. Accordingly, disciplinary action under this policy shall only result from willful and intentional violations of this policy.

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Notwithstanding, the District reserves the right to discipline any **user** for violations of this policy where it is apparent that the **user** knew, or should have known, that violations of this policy were likely to occur as a result of the actions, or inactions, of the **user** in question. Should a violation of the AUP occur, disciplinary actions **shall result in, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:**

- Restriction, suspension or revocation of access privileges;
- Removal from a class activity;
- Removal from a course;
- Removal from an extracurricular activity;
- Detention, suspension or expulsion;
- Referral to the appropriate legal authorities for possible criminal prosecution;
- Civil liability;
- Termination of employment.

### ***IX. Privacy***

**Users** have no rights of privacy with regard to their use of the Litchfield School District technology resources, which include but not limited to the Litchfield School District computers, network, e-mail, and sections of the Litchfield School District Website and Internet access. The Litchfield School District retains ownership and possessory control of its technology resources. The District does not guarantee confidentiality, privacy, security or ownership of the content of any information accessed, sent, received, created or stored thereon. Information sent through the Internet is accessible by third parties, specifically the Internet Service Provider, therefore no user or group should have any expectation of confidentiality, privacy, security or inviolable proprietary rights to any information created or stored on the district network, hardware or electronic media.

The Litchfield School District technology resources are maintained and managed by a network administrator in such a way as to insure its availability and reliability in performing the Litchfield School District educational mission. **All users** are advised that the District's technology resources are treated as a shared filing system. In the ordinary course of business, pursuit of educational purposes, routine maintenance, or in the course of an investigation to protect the health, welfare and safety of the District, its staff and students, a network administrator or other authorized District staff member may, at any time, without advance notice to **users**, monitor, access, modify, remove, review, retrieve, and/or disclose the subject, content and appropriateness of any information stored or transmitted on District technology resources, including information that may have been deleted but still exists on the system. **All users** are put on notice that deleted files or messages are never completely removed and may be retrieved or restored. No users should save their personal work on computer hard drives or the network, but rather should use a personal storage device for saving their work. **Users** shall frequently delete old files. During routine maintenance the network administrator may delete files stored on any of the Litchfield School District technology resources.

The District makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology services it is providing. While the Litchfield School District will make every effort to preserve data, the responsibility for it lies with the student, faculty, or staff. The District will not be held responsible for any damages a student, faculty, or staff member may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries or service interruption caused by its own negligence or student, faculty, or staff errors or omissions.

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The District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its technology resources. **All users** must fully understand that the use of any information obtained through the Internet is at their own risk.

The Litchfield School District reserves the right to record all Internet addresses and electronic communications accessed by **all users**. Likewise, the District has the right to determine what information is posted on its website and it will routinely monitor all technology resources in order to maintain their integrity and to ensure compliance with this policy. Any and all violations of this policy detected by the network administrator will be reported to the School Principal or appropriate District Administrator for disciplinary action.

### ***X. Personal Computers***

Faculty, staff and student personal computers will not be configured for the Litchfield School Districts' network. Personal devices will not be serviced by the Technology Department.

### ***XI. Copyrighted and Other Proprietary Materials***

It is the intent of the Litchfield School District to adhere to the provisions of the U.S. Copyright Act, the license agreements and/or policy statements contained in software packages used by the District. **All users** shall be responsible for respecting the copyright and proprietary interest of any materials accessed through the Litchfield School District technology resources. No user may duplicate copyrighted materials, graphics or software, including school owned software, without permission from the copyright holder, unless the use falls within the legal parameters of the Fair Use Doctrine, whether for personal use or for the use of others. The improper duplication or use of copyrighted materials is a violation of this policy and is subject to disciplinary action, as well as possible civil liability and criminal prosecution.

### ***XII. Complaints***

Any violations of this policy should be reported to a classroom teacher, school principal or a district administrator. The principal or administrator shall document all complaints, conduct an investigation and report the information, including any disciplinary action, to the Superintendent. In the case of a student violation, the incident and any disciplinary action shall be reported to the student's parents/guardians.

Students or district employees who are disciplined as a result of this policy have the same appeal procedure as any disciplinary action, which is through the School Principal or appropriate District Administrator, the Superintendent and the School Board.

### **Statutory References:**

*RSA 194:3-d, School District Computer Networks*

*47 U.S.C. Section 254, Children's Internet Protection Act, Effective April 20, 2001*

### **References**

*EHB/EHB-R, Records Retention Policy & procedure*

*GBAA/JBAA, Sexual Harassment Policy*

*GBCB, Staff Conduct*

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***APPROVAL:***

*GBCC, Anti-Fraternization*

*GBEBB, Employee/Student Relations*

*JICDD, Cyber-bullying*

*JICK, Pupil Safety & Violence Prevention (Bullying)*

*JM, Staff-Student Relations*

Approval: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, March 4, 2020  
Reviewed: 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, February 19, 2020  
Revised: January 31, 2020  
Approval: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, December 14, 2016