

Staff and Elected Officials/Committee Appointments Responsible Use Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Natick Public Schools (NPS) Staff and Elected Officials/Committee Appointees Responsible Use Policy (RUP) is to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by users online, prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information, and to comply with legislation including, but not limited to, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts Public Records Law. Furthermore, the RUP clarifies the educational purpose of district technology.

NPS uses technology protection measures to block or filter access, as much as reasonably possible, to visual and written depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors over the network. The District can and will monitor user online activities and access, review, copy, and store or delete any communications or files and disclose them to others as it deems necessary. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of NPS equipment, network, and/or Internet access or files, including email.

All employees and school officials/appointees are required to use their school issued accounts for all communications with students or when conducting all school business. This will ensure compliance with the Commonwealth's public records laws M.G.L. c. 66, & 10(b) and archiving regulations. The law requires public employees or officials who send, receive or maintain records in their capacity as public employees or officials, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When public employees or officials communicate through school-based resources, such as staff email or school sponsored web pages, such records are retained and archived through the school's information technology department. If, however, an employee or official communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained, and the burden then falls on the employee or official to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students, community members, and/or parents and guardians.

NPS will take all necessary measures to secure the network against potential cyber security threats. This may include blocking access to websites, applications, including, but not limited to, email, data management and reporting tools, and other web applications.

Summary

Natick Public Schools believes in a Digital Citizenship model for supporting safe and responsible use of all **Online and Digital Technologies (ODT)** in teaching and learning. An important part of this is that we are able to show others what that responsible use looks like.

Because we know this is important for us all, we ask everyone, the staff, officials/appointees, students and volunteers working at our schools to agree to use the internet and other ODT in a safe and responsible way. NPS utilizes resources from [Common Sense Education](#) for our Digital Citizenship curriculum.

All staff and officials/appointees are responsible for practicing positive Digital Citizenship. Positive Digital Citizenship includes appropriate behavior and contributions on websites, use of [cell phones](#), [social media](#), discussion boards, media sharing sites and all other electronic communications, including new technology. It is important to be honest in all digital communications without disclosing sensitive personal information. Employees and officials/appointees should also reference the [Educator Ethics Protocol](#) which provides a useful framework for decision making around what is and is not responsible, ethical conduct.

Jurisdiction

This policy is in effect:

- When NPS-provided equipment (laptops, tablets, etc.) is used on or off school property;
- When non-NPS devices access the district network or district resources; or,
- at home, or other locations, if the improper use creates a hostile environment at school for any student/employee and/or cause disruption or disorder within the school.

Responsible Use Guidelines for Employees and Officials/Appointees

If you are supervising students using technology, be vigilant in order to ensure students are meeting the provisions outlined in the RUP.

Digital Citizenship

- ☐ I understand all employees and officials/appointees are responsible for modeling and actively practicing positive digital citizenship.
- ☐ I understand any employee and officials/appointees using classroom technology are explicitly required to teach students about positive digital citizenship.
- ☐ I understand what employees and officials/appointees do and post online must not disrupt school activities or compromise school safety and security.

Privacy

- ☐ I will not share personal information about students or employees including, but not limited to, names, home addresses, date of birth, telephone numbers, student ID numbers, employee numbers, and visuals.
- ☐ I understand the transfer of student information shall be only through approved District information systems. Email and collaborative documents are not secure methods for transmitting student data.
- ☐ I will be aware of privacy settings on websites that I visit.
- ☐ I will abide by all laws, this Responsible Use Policy, and all District security policies.

Passwords

- ☐ I understand that under no circumstances are District passwords to be shared with others, including other District staff or students.
- ☐ I will log out of unattended equipment and accounts in order to maintain privacy and security.

Professional Language

- ☐ I will use professional language in all work-related communications including email, social media posts, audio recordings, conferencing, and artistic works.

Cyberbullying

- ☐ I understand bullying in any form, including cyber bullying, is unacceptable both in and out of school.
- ☐ I will report all cases of bullying to the building principal or district administrator.

Inappropriate Material

- ☐ I will not seek out, display, or circulate material that is hate speech, sexually explicit, or violent while at school or while identified as a District employee.
- ☐ I understand exceptions may be made in an appropriate educational context.
- ☐ I understand the use of the District network for illegal, political, or commercial purposes is strictly forbidden.
- ☐ I understand transmitting large files that are unrelated to District business and disruptive to the District network is prohibited.

Security

- ☐ I understand all users are responsible for respecting and maintaining the security of District electronic resources and networks.
- ☐ I will not use the District network or equipment to obtain unauthorized information, attempt to access information protected by privacy laws, or impersonate other users.
- ☐ I will not try to bypass security settings and filters, including through the use of proxy servers.
- ☐ I will not install or use illegal software or files, including unauthorized software or apps, on any District computers, tablets, smartphones, or new technologies.

Equipment and Network Safety

- ☐ I will take all reasonable precautions when handling District equipment.
- ☐ I will report any technical issues I am experiencing to the Technology Services Department in a timely fashion.
- ☐ I will use caution when downloading files, opening emails, clicking on links or opening attachments as these could be a phishing attack and contain viruses or malware.
- ☐ I understand vandalism in any form is prohibited and must be reported to the appropriate administrator and/or technical personnel.

Data Storage and Backup

- ☐ I understand the school district provides me with a Google account to save and store all my data and files.
- ☐ I understand it is my responsibility to backup and protect any data or files that I create.
- ☐ I understand I should not save or store personal data or files on any device.
- ☐ I understand that the school district may re-image any computer at anytime to maintain the equipment in good working order.

Copyright and Trademarks

- ☐ While there are fair use exemptions (<http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>), I understand I must respect intellectual property.
- ☐ I will follow all copyright guidelines (<http://copyright.gov/title17/>) when using the work of others.
- ☐ I will not download illegally obtained music, software, apps, and other works.
- ☐ I understand all NPS trademarks, logos and symbols are for school district use only.

Public Records Law

- ☐ I will use only school provided resources and accounts when communicating with students, staff or conducting all school business to comply with the Commonwealth's public records laws M.G.L. c. 66, & 10(b).
- ☐ I will use my school issued email account for daily communications.
- ☐ I will use Google Hangouts/Chat feature when I need to communicate urgently with other staff or in a time sensitive manner. Imessage does not comply with archiving regulations.
- ☐ I will use Blackboard Connect when I need to target communications to students or families in mass attending the Natick Public Schools.
- ☐ I will use Constant Contact when communicating general information with the Natick Community at large.

Consequences for Irresponsible Use

Misuse of NPS ODT may result in restricted access or account cancellation. Failure to uphold the responsibilities listed above is misuse. Such misuse may also lead to disciplinary and/or legal action against employees and officials/appointees, including personnel action and/or criminal prosecution by government authorities. The District will attempt to tailor any disciplinary action to the specific issues related to each violation.

Disclaimer

NPS makes no guarantees about the quality of the services provided and is not liable for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from use of the network or District accounts. Users are responsible for any charges incurred while using District devices and/or network.

NPS also denies any liability for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible online is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of the District, its affiliates, employees, and officials/appointees.