

Essex County Vocational Technical Schools Acceptable Technology Policy for Students

Purpose

Essex County Vocational Technical Schools (ECVTS) provides technology resources with a firm belief that the educational advantages outweigh the potential for misuse. In return, ECVTS expects students to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources. Our goals are to provide access to educational tools, resources, and communication, and to encourage innovation and collaboration. Our policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of these tools.

Expectations & Rules

Responsible use of ECVTS' technology resources is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of the school's mission. We expect students to avoid computer activities which interfere in any way with the learning process. Some activities are expressly prohibited by law; other activities are inappropriate as defined by the administration of the school. The following guidelines are intended to clarify expectations for conduct, but should not be construed as all-inclusive, as we cannot outline every possible permutation of student behavior with technology. We require students to use technology in accordance with general expectations for appropriate student behavior as outlined in various other school policies. Violating any portion of this signed agreement may result in disciplinary review, including possible suspension or expulsion from ECVTS, and/or legal action. ECVTS will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in any investigation related to any potentially illegal activities conducted through our network. The school reserves the right to apply disciplinary consequences for computer-related activities conducted off-campus if such activity adversely affects the safety or well-being of students or other members of our community, or constitutes behavior embarrassing to the school.

Online Behavior

- I understand that I am exemplifying a student of ECVTS whenever and wherever I use online communications (both at school and at home.) This includes, but is not limited to: email, chat, instant-messaging, texting, gaming, and social networking sites. In all of my online communication with classmates and teachers I will be respectful and polite.
- If I am uncertain whether a specific computer activity is permitted or appropriate, I will ask a teacher, parent, or the technology department before engaging in that activity.

Privacy

- I will not share my network password with anyone, or use anyone else's network password. If I become aware of another individual's password, I will inform that person or a member of the technology staff.
- I will be ethical and respect the privacy of others throughout the ECVTS network and internet, and will not share or access others' folders, files, or data without authorization.
- I understand that ECVTS has the right to look at any data, email, logs, or files that exist on the network or on individual computers without the prior consent of system users. In addition, ECVTS reserves the right to view or remove any files on the network or on individual computers without prior notice to users.
- I will not share or post online personally identifying information about any members of the ECVTS community without permission (addresses, phone numbers, email

addresses, photos, videos, etc.)

- I will not make audio or video recordings of another student or teacher without his/her permission.

Use of School Technology Resources

- I will use my ECVTS email and network space only for school-related activities.
- I will not use my ECVTS email account to send out mass unsolicited messages or to forward chain letters, joke collections, or other objectionable materials.
- I will not use ECVTS technology resources for commercial activity or to seek monetary gain.
- I will not deliberately perform any act which will negatively impact the operation of anyone's computers, printers or networks. I will make an effort to keep my computer free from viruses and other destructive materials. If my computer is accidentally infected, I will seek help from the technology department.
- I will not store, transfer, or use software or settings for hacking, eavesdropping, network administration/monitoring, or network security circumvention.
- I will not install or boot to non-approved operating systems on ECVTS computers.

Obscene or Inappropriate Materials

- I will not search for (or download) any material that is offensive, lewd, or pornographic. (Offensive material is pro-violence, hateful, discriminatory, or anti-social. An exception to this policy is granted for teacher-assigned research projects.)
- If I mistakenly access inappropriate information, I will notify a teacher or staff person immediately.

Copyright & Plagiarism

- I will properly cite any resources that I use in my school-work.
- I will not plagiarize from any sources. (Plagiarism is taking someone else's writing, images, or idea and presenting it as your own.)
- Except for "educational fair use" as defined by a teacher, I will not copy, save, or redistribute copyrighted material (files, music, software, etc.) Users should assume material is copyrighted unless it is stated clearly to the contrary.

Laptop Computers

- I will have my district issued (if applicable) laptop at school, in good working order, charged, every day.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to back up my computer files and if I need help doing this I will ask my teacher or go to the technology department for assistance.
- I will protect and carry my laptop and charger around school and treat it gently at all times, I will not leave my laptop or charger unattended or exposed to the weather.
- I and my parents understand that the laptop warranty does not cover damage. Parents should decide whether additional insurance is necessary to cover this possibility. [In the event of theft or loss, families may be expected to replace the computer.]
- I and my parents understand that in the event of a theft that the police and school must be notified immediately. This will begin the process of recovery for the laptop using the embedded tracking technology.

- I understand that I am permitted to customize my laptop settings (e.g. background screens, and various control panel options) only if these settings are appropriate to a school environment.
- I understand that I am to contact the technology department to install software on my laptop if it is legally owned, with the exception of: 1) any software that causes system problems, 2) file-sharing or “peer-to-peer” software, and 3) games. [The tech department strongly suggests that students minimize software installations because they can cause system errors that necessitate re-imaging.]
- I understand that all software (and stickers) installed by ECVTS must remain on the laptop at all times, and attempts to disable or bypass installed software or network settings are a violation of this policy.

Internet Safety at Home

- Parents must know what their children are doing online. It is recommended that computers are used in a family area rather than in a child's room, and that parents check regularly to see what your child is doing online.
- Set aside a regular time to work on the computer with your child to learn about his or her online interests and activities.
- Teach your child to end any experience online when he or she feels uncomfortable and to discuss the event with a trusted adult.
- Establish an atmosphere of trust, understanding, and learning with your child by not blaming him or her for uncomfortable online experiences.
- Teach your child to never give out personal information unless he or she has your permission and you know how and by whom the information will be used.
- Teach your child that they should never meet with a person that they have met online, even if in a public place, unless you are present.
- Establish strict rules for ordering products online.
- Discuss the difference between advertising and educational or entertaining content, and show your child examples of each. Flashy advertising links often lead children astray.

Teen Safety with Social Networking Sites

- Talk with your child about his/her use of social networking sites (e.g. Facebook.)
- Ask questions and learn about how your child uses these sites.
- Make sure your child has set his/her "profile page" to private.
- Your child should have to approve "friend-requests." Make sure that they don't just randomly approve all requests.
- Communicate with other ECVTS parents and the school about your concerns, experiences, and strategies for helping our teens learn appropriate use.

Internet Filtering & Monitoring Software

- Internet filtering software blocks inappropriate content on the internet, but it is not perfect and savvy students can often bypass filters. Please don't depend upon it as a 100% solution to the problem of inappropriate content on the internet.
- The ECVTS computer network does employ a network-based content filter for district issued devices that blocks designated and inappropriate websites while students are at school and home.

