

# **Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany**

## ***Internet Safety/Technology Acceptable Use Policy***

The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany (Our Schools) provide technology resources to students, faculty, and staff to promote educational excellence through an integrated academic, spiritual, and extra-curricular program. We expect that our schools' technology resources be used in a reasonable, efficient, ethical, moral, and legal manner in accordance with the mission, values, understandings, and beliefs of The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany Acceptable Use Policy applies to all technology and Internet resources including, but not limited to: device computers, desktop computers, mobile devices (i.e. Smartphone, tablets, etc.), video and audio equipment, information storage devices, and cloud based applications. The use of these resources is a privilege and carries with it certain responsibilities. All technology resources are to be used for educational purposes per this policy. Any user who violates this policy or any applicable local, state, or federal law, faces the loss of technology privileges, risks school disciplinary action, and may face legal prosecution. With access to the Internet comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Families must be aware that some material obtained via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. For this reason, and as required by the Childrens' Internet Protection Act [Pub.L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)], technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet content, or other forms of electronic communications at school. Filters also limit access to any social networking or personal website, email, blog, or chat room through which minors may easily access or be presented with obscene or indecent material; may easily be subject to unlawful advances, or inappropriate communication with adults; or may easily access other material that is harmful to minors. Our Schools have taken precautions to control access to controversial materials and have instructed students in the proper use of the Internet, electronic mail, and software. Our Schools are not responsible for materials acquired by the student online, for violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes, or negligence of any kind incurred by users.

All technology systems, information stored on them, and work performed are governed by this **Technology Acceptable Use Policy** and are subject to school supervision and inspection whether they reside on school owned computers or devices brought on campus by students. Our Schools reserve the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read, and disclose all messages, information, and files created, sent, posted from, stored on devices brought onto campus, or stored on its systems (including connections made from sites visited) to law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice. As the primary educators of their children, parents are expected to discuss acceptable use of technology with their children and monitor the use of the computer accordingly. To gain access to the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission. The signatures at the end of this Policy are legally binding and indicate the party (Parties) who signed has (have) read the Terms and Conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.

The use of the Internet and school accounts must be consistent with the educational objectives of The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. Students are to report any misuse of the network to a faculty member. Misuse consists of intentional access of any Internet site deemed inappropriate by the faculty at the school. Misuse also includes any conduct in and out of school that reflects negatively upon the reputation of the school. Misuse includes any message(s) sent, posted, or received that indicates or suggests harassment, racism, sexism, and inappropriate language or symbols. Transmission of any material in violation of Our Schools' policies or any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. The use of the technology is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges and other disciplinary action. In the classroom environment, the faculty member in charge will deem what is inappropriate use, and his or her decision is final.

**Netiquette:** Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Be polite. Do not use inappropriate language. Students are representatives of our school community. A student may be alone at a computer, but what is written or posted can be viewed globally. Students will not send or post information which disparages the reputation of any school in The Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, any of its faculty, staff, or students. Students will not email, IM, post to websites or blogs, or text message any inappropriate graphics, images, or pictures.

**Social Media:** The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany respect the right of students, faculty, staff, and alumni to use a variety of social media to learn, communicate, and connect. As a community committed to Catholic values, academic excellence, the safety of our students, we expect that all members of our community will meet the standards written below in their use of social media. The schools expect that students, faculty, and staff will use social media in an ethical, moral, and legal manner in accordance with the mission, values, understandings, and policies and procedures of The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. Social Media is defined as any web-based or mobile technologies that turns communication into a dialogue. Social media takes on many different forms, and uses a variety of technologies including but not limited to: blogs, Internet forums, wall postings, wikis, podcasts, picture-sharing, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, Internet telephony, etc. To promote respectful discussion within this forum, students, faculty and staff are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. You must be polite, courteous, and avoid comments that are profane, obscene, offensive, sexually explicit, inappropriate, inflammatory or otherwise objectionable. Blogs and discussion boards often foster debate of an issue, and users are expected to engage in such exchanges with mutual respect for others' opinions. For the privacy of users and their families, assume that social media participation will be publicly available on the Internet and therefore publicly accessible without limitation or protection of any kind. Consider how much personal information to share, with the understanding that anyone can link this information to your name and publish it on the Internet. Students are urged to always exercise extreme caution when participating in any form of social media or online communications, both within the school community and beyond. Students who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts reflect on the entire school community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the Student/Family/Faculty Handbook (Handbook).

In addition to the regulations found in the Handbook, students are reminded that their behavioral expectations must align with the Mission and Philosophy of the school, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, which affirm the teachings, moral values, and ethical standards of the Catholic Church. Students are expected to abide by the following:

- To protect the privacy of the school, students and faculty, students may not create digital video recordings or pictures of the school community members either on campus or at off-campus school events for online publication or distribution that convey inappropriate or illegal behavior.
- Students may not use social media sites to publish information or remarks deemed to be disparaging or harassing toward school community members or that convey illegal or inappropriate activity. Students who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not reflect poorly upon members of our community. Failure to abide by this Policy, as with other policies at our school, may result in disciplinary action as described in the Handbook or as determined by the administration of the school.

**Copyright:** Students are expected to abide by copyright laws and to properly cite the use of intellectual property created by others. Plagiarism is illegal, against the mission of The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, and will result in disciplinary action

**Security:** If a student identifies a security problem on the Internet, he or she must notify a faculty member (teacher or administrator) immediately. Students will not demonstrate the problem to other students. Students

may not use another individual's account at any time. Attempts to log onto the Internet as anyone else will result in cancellation of his or her Internet privileges. Any student identified as a security risk will be denied access to the Internet.

**Privacy:** Students should not reveal or post his/her home address or personal phone number or that of any member of the school to anyone on the Internet at any time. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. Students should not send anything that he/she does not want others to read. All history and documents created using a school issued email is saved on the school's domain server. Students are not permitted to delete search history on a school –owned device.

**Vandalism/Hacking:** Vandalism or hacking will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, destruction of hardware, software and peripherals, the creation or uploading of any computer viruses, and the downloading of unauthorized games. This includes, but is not limited to, attempts at gaining unauthorized access, willful damage to computers and peripherals, or changing on-line materials without permission.

**Digital & Mobile Devices:** Digital and mobile devices that can take and/or transmit electronic images cannot be used to take or transmit images that violate the mission of The Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. Taking pictures, videos, or recordings of faculty members or students without their knowledge is a violation of this policy. The transmission and display/sharing of inappropriate images is subject to disciplinary and legal action. During our school year, we often have opportunities to showcase our school in brochures, open house inserts, and in the newspaper. If you do not want your child to be photographed, please send in a written statement in September for our records.

**Cyber-bullying and Cyber-harassment:** Cyber-bullying and cyber-harassment are not tolerated. Cyberbullying is defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of any electronic device. Cyber-harassment involves threatening or harassing messages or posts which torment an individual. Students found to be engaged in cyber-bullying and/or cyber-harassment are in violation of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Swift and appropriate will be taken, including but not limited to notifying local law enforcement. All Saints Catholic Academy attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats online, seriously or in jest, may face suspension or expulsion.

**Gaming:** Gaming on campus is prohibited, unless under the specific direction of an instructor for educational purposes. Students found gaming without faculty approval and supervision will face appropriate disciplinary action. School issued emails may not be used for internet gaming accounts.

**Confidentiality:** The school reserves the right to inspect and examine communications system used by our students at any time. When sources outside the school request an inspection of any communication system or files, the school will treat information as confidential unless any one or more of the following conditions exist: when approved by the appropriate school official(s) to which the request is directed; when authorized by the owner(s) of the media; when required by federal, state or local law; when required by a valid subpoena or court order. When notice is required by law, court order or subpoena, students will receive prior notice of such disclosures. Viewing information in the course of normal system maintenance does not constitute disclosure.

**Sanctions:** Violations of the terms and conditions of this Agreement shall subject users to loss of computer access, as well as other disciplinary action. Illegal acts involving school computing resources may also subject violators to prosecution by local, state, and/or federal authorities.

**Blogs and Social Networking Agreement:** Posting on online blogs or social networking sites such as, but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, etc. may result in disciplinary actions should the contents of the blog include defamatory comments about our school, our faculty, or our students.