

POLICY

No. 4725

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ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES

EMPLOYEES

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Use of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services provided computer and telephone systems (including Internet, e-mail, voice-mail access and facsimile machines) is authorized by BOCES Divisions within their departments as needed, based on job function.

This policy applies to All Users, whether full time, part time, or temporary employees, independent consultants and volunteers (hereinafter collectively referred to as "All Users"). Generally, it is the policy of the organization to allow computer and telephone use strictly for business purposes. Access by All Users to information not directly related to that user's job responsibilities without proper authorization is prohibited.

1. General Statement

All computer system networks, business and telephone equipment and other electronic communication systems, and all communications and stored information transmitted, received or contained within the BOCES information systems is BOCES property and is to be used solely for job-related purposes and educational purposes for student usage. The BOCES may access and monitor such use on a random basis to ensure that such equipment is used for proper purposes. The reasons for this monitoring are many, including cost analysis and management of the BOCES gateway to the Internet. Staff should therefore assume such communications are not totally private and should not transmit any confidential data. The existence of a staff member pass code or password does not necessarily mean that messages sent using a password or pass code will be confidential.

Adopted: April 11, 2002

Ratified: May 20, 2002

The BOCES strictly prohibits non-job-related uses of its software and business equipment, including but not limited to telephone systems, telecopiers, computers, copy machines, and facsimile devices.

Staff are also prohibited from using codes, accessing files, or retrieving any stored communication without prior authorization.

Each staff is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that he/she places or sends over the BOCES computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice mail access. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent which hides the identity to the sender, or represents the sender as someone else or someone from another organization. All messages communicated on the BOCES computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice mail access must contain the staff member's name.

Any messages or information sent by a staff member to another individual outside of the BOCES via electronic network (e.g., bulletin board, online services or Internet) are also statements that reflect on the BOCES. While some users include personal "disclaimers" in electronic messages, there is still a connection to the BOCES, and the statements may be tied to the organization.

2. Acceptable Uses of Organizational Systems

The BOCES provided computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access is intended for business and educational use only. The BOCES encourages the use of the computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access, because it makes communication more efficient and effective. However, the computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access is organizational property, and its purpose is to facilitate the organization's service to its instructors, students, administrators and other users, and to aid the organizations communications with the public. Staff are required to use the computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access in a productive professional manner. To ensure that all staff are responsible, the following guidelines have been established for using the computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access. Any improper or unauthorized use of the computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access is not acceptable and will not be permitted.

3. Unacceptable Uses of Organizational Systems

A. Personal Uses

E-mail networks and voice-mail shall not be used to solicit for outside business ventures, organizational campaigns, and political or religious causes. Any use of such equipment for these types of activities is prohibited. Unauthorized use of e-mail or voice-mail for non-business purposes is also strictly prohibited. Solicitation of non-organizational business or any use of the BOCES computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access for personal gain is prohibited.

B. Offensive Content

The BOCES computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storage of any communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene or X-rated. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference shall be transmitted. No abusive, profane or offensive language is to be transmitted through the BOCES computer and telephone system with its Internet, e-mail and voice-mail access. Electronic media may also not be used for any other purpose that is illegal, against organizational policy or contrary to the organization's best interest. In addition, all staff are prohibited from downloading, viewing, transmitting and/or possessing pornographic, profane, sexually explicit, or racially offensive materials with the BOCES equipment or systems. As used herein the terms obscene, profane, pornography, sexually, explicit, and racially offensive shall have the meaning given to them by statute, case law or by common usage and understanding in the community.

C. Misuse of Intellectual Property

Staff members are also prohibited from accessing, distributing or publishing through the use of the BOCES equipment, materials which have been identified as trade secrets or proprietary information of the organization without proper authorization.

D. Unauthorized Transmission of Copyright Materials Over Organizational Systems

Copyright materials, may not be transmitted to staff over the BOCES e-mail/Internet system. All staff obtaining access to other companies' or individuals' materials must respect all copyrights and not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyright materials, except with permission, or as a single copy to reference only.

E. Unauthorized Downloading or Installation of Software

Unauthorized downloading of any software, whether from the Internet or any other source is prohibited. All software downloaded or loaded from a disc onto a computer must be registered to the organization, screened with virus detection software and authorized for use on that computer.

F. Privacy and Unauthorized Access

The policy is violated when users break into or attempt to break into a file which is identified as a confidential file or otherwise abuse the privilege of computer access, or abuse the system by unauthorized surfing.

Similarly, the use of the BOCES systems to access information, voice mail or e-mail messages or other communications identified as not intended to be received by the staff member (except otherwise noted in this policy) is prohibited. Access to the organization's computer system from any network terminal or personal computer on the organization's communication network shall only be permitted through connection established and authorized by the BOCES. For security reasons no other e-mail and/or Internet connections will be allowed, except as authorized by the BOCES.

4. Monitoring

All staff are hereby put on notice that telephone calls and usage patterns for the BOCES e-mail/Internet communications and voice-mail system may be monitored. All messages created, sent or retrieved over the BOCES e-mail/Internet is the property of the organization and should be considered as being in the public domain and/or BOCES property, notwithstanding the staff using a personal access code.

The BOCES reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the organization's E-mail/Internet and voice-mail system. Staff should not assume electronic

communications are private and should transmit highly confidential data in other ways. All staff are put on notice that system security features, such as passwords and message delete functions, do not take away the ability to archive any message, at any time, for future viewing. Electronic and voice-mail communications are subject to search without notice.

5. Reporting Security Problems

The BOCES Security Officer must be notified when any organizational information is lost or disclosed to unauthorized parties, unauthorized use of organizational information systems has taken place, passwords or other system access control mechanisms are lost, stolen, or disclosed, or any of the preceding is suspected to have happened. Unusual system behavior should also be reported; it may indicate the presence of a virus or other security problem. Probing the security mechanism at either the organizational or other Internet sites using the organizational computer and telephone system is prohibited.

6. Expenses

No individual staff may use these systems which in any manner results in unauthorized charges or expenses to the BOCES.

7. Expiration of E-mail

E-mail stored on the BOCES e-mail servers may be deleted, on a periodic basis, at the convenience of the BOCES.

8. Sanctions

All Users of the BOCES computer network and equipment are required to comply with the BOCES policy and regulations governing the BOCES computer network. Failure to comply with the policy or regulation may result in suspension and/or revocation of computer access privileges as well as discipline up to and including discharge.

In addition, illegal activities are strictly prohibited. Any information pertaining to or implicating illegal activity will be reported to the proper authorities. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal, state and/or local law or regulation is prohibited. This

includes, but is not limited to materials protected by copyright, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret. All Users must respect all intellectual and property rights and laws.

9. Disclaimer (plausible deniability)

BOCES makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the electronic communication services it is providing. BOCES will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service. BOCES will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information stored on BOCES storage devices; nor for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through BOCES provided electronic communication services. BOCES will not be responsible for personal property used to access BOCES computers or networks or for BOCES provided Internet access. BOCES will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from BOCES provided access to the Internet.

10. Law

This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

For information on Acceptable Use of Computerized Information Resources - Students see Policy # 5095.