**OFFICE OF QUALITY PROFESSIONALS & SPECIAL SCHOOLS**
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**
**June 14-15, 2012**


**MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

E.      Approval to modify Mississippi School for the Blind 2012-2013 Staff Handbook to
        include the Acceptable Use Policy and Guidelines

### Executive Summary

The document adds a section to the staff handbook that defines acceptable
policy and guidelines to address electronic mail, vandalism, overall acceptable
use  policy  and  guidelines,  deportment,  monetary  responsibility,
uploading/downloading files and Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

The MSB internet access system is specifically designed for the educational use of the students, teachers, support staff and administrators at MSB.  It is meant to provide access to the internet as a research tool for both student and employee, alike.  Where appropriate, computers and peripherals are provided with screen reader access so there is equitable access for the sighted and visually impaired.  Because this access to the internet and e-mail may be misused either by intent or accident, it is required and mandated that an Appropriate Use Policy (AUP) be in place and that all who might have access to the internet or e-mail are required to acknowledge the contents of this document by signing and dating where indicated.

It is the intent of this MSB Acceptable Use Policy to ensure all uses involving the access to the internet and e-mail and all of the hardware and software is in compliance with de jure and de facto federal and state law(s) and the stated mission and goals of MSB.  This document is to provide guidelines for acceptable use of the system by both staff and students.

The internet presents an opportunity to gain access to an almost limitless source of information.  With this opportunity, however, is attached the responsibility for legal, appropriate, safe, responsible, efficient, and ethical use.  Therefore, student and staff acceptance of these guidelines as indicated by the staff members' signature, the signature of the underage students' parents, and/or the age-of–majority students' signature(s) is evidence of willingness to conduct themselves accordingly.

Access to the internet is generally made via local, state, and/or worldwide computer networks.  A computer network is a group of computers interconnected with each other with the ability to exchange information.  An example of that interconnection is the internet and World Wide Web.  The internet is an ever expanding source of worldwide information.  Hence, the internet is the access point to the World Wide Web.  At one end is the user who may access the information on the other end (the web) at will.  There is the potential, however, for abuse of the Internet and for that reason this Acceptable Use Policy is provided as a guideline in accordance with federal and state laws.

**Electronic Mail (email)**

Email in its simplest form is a message sent through the Internet from one person(s) to another person(s).  Though the contents are protected as private and personal and are not public domain or to be read without permission by anyone other than the intended recipient—there is no legal expectation of privacy.  MSB allows the filtering of email to any student.  This is not done to investigate the contents of personal messages rather, instead, as an effort to protect these students from gratuitous individuals attempting to contact the students for illegal purposes.  Students from the 10th through the 12th grades are granted more leeway and are expected to filter their own email and, except for

periodic checks, their email will not be reviewed before delivery.  This latitude is not meant to imply, nor does it imply, any expectation of privacy on the part of the student.  Being held as responsible individuals, these students are, however, expected to report suspicious contacts to the classroom or homeroom teacher or the residential education house parent.  And, if warranted, those individuals will report the incident to their supervisors and/or principal.  Examples include but are not limited to: offers to meet them and begin a friendship, offers of money or other items for any reason, offers of visits to their homes, attempts to gain personal information, offers to sell items of value for reduced prices, offers of free merchandise in exchange for information (address, directions to their home or school, mother's and father's name, etc.) and so forth.  Complaints will be investigated first at the teacher and principal or house parent and residential education supervisor level and, if warranted, by the superintendent.  If it is felt an attempt being made to contact a student (or staff member) for illegal purposes the matter will be handed over to the proper legal authorities.  Aside from such direct contacts, there is the potential to receive messages through general posting or through spamming (unsolicited junk mail).  Some of these messages contain illegal statements.  Illegal messages include but are not limited to: Material which contains or is alleged to contain viruses, defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or other illegal materials or subject matter real or implied.  MSB will cooperate fully with the legal authorities in stopping and eradicating such contacts.

An email address is required to receive email through the Internet.  Such an address may be eventually assigned to each individual at MSB with the exception, at the present time, of students from kindergarten through the 9th grade.  They will receive email through their respective homeroom teacher's email address with the individual student name in the "Subject" section.  Additionally, this e-mail may be posted through "Active Parent" or "Active Student" because of the filtering and protections afforded through that service.  Again, all of these measures are an attempt to provide security for these students.

No one is to reveal their "Userid/Signon/Logon" name or their "Password".  These will be the property of the individual, the MSB system, and the MDE/MIS WAN/LAN.  When a student or staff person leaves MSB (graduates, transfers, retires, or terminates employment), their Logon name and Password will be deleted.  Any individual revealing their Logon or Password except to the system administrator, the building principal, or the superintendent and/or their assigns may have their privileges revoked.  This measure is intended to protect the integrity of the system and the individual.  Attempts to Logon using the Logon or Password of another will result in immediate termination of privileges for one month and monitoring/supervision for another month while on the Internet/WAN/LAN.  If the Logon or Password is lost or forgotten, the teacher, residential education house parent, building principal, residential education supervisor, superintendent, and/or system administrator should be contacted.  If an individual has reason to suspect another has used their access, the same order of contact should be followed.

**Vandalism**

Vandalism will be defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, any computer or component of that computer or any other computer or peripheral, or using the access systems in an inappropriate manner (loading unapproved programs, viruses, playing incorrect CD's or changing or altering wiring patterns, as examples). Do not bring in floppy disks or programs from home. The system in use is designed to operate within very specific parameters. A single line of contradictory code can destroy an entire LAN system. If anyone has a question as to the appropriate use, the hierarchy or order noted just above should be followed.


**Overall Acceptable Use Policy and Guidelines**

It is the intent of the Internet and LAN access to provide the opportunity for the expansion of education and research through a variety of avenues previously not available. This is not to say there is no time when the Internet cannot be accessed for personal use; doing so is a part of the education process because the avenues of the Internet change hourly. It is essential both the staff person and the student remain up-to-date on the intricacies of navigating the Web. Accessing the Internet, however, is not meant to interfere with the expected and reasonable activities during the school day or during dormitory activities. The Internet is a means--not an end, therefore;


1.      All use must be consistent with the purposes of MSB as an educational and residential facility for the blind and visually impaired

2.      The intent of the acceptable use policy is to make clear the cases which are likely consistent with the purposes of MSB and its access system, not to provide a complete list of all possible uses

3.      Administration (including the MDE/MIS) may make determinations that certain uses are or are not consistent with the intent of the MSB access system

4.      If a use is consistent with the purposes of MSB, then activities in direct support of that use will be considered consistent

5.      Use in support of research or instruction at not-for-profit institutions in the United States is consistent with the educational/research purposes of MSB as long as no personal or identifying data is released for any reason


6.      Use which is part of or supports a research or instruction activity for a not-for-profit institution of research or instruction in the United States is acceptable, even if any or all parties to the use are located or employed elsewhere (APH, as an example).

7.      Use for commercial activities by for-profit institutions is generally not acceptable unless it is in agreement with numbers 1 and 4, above

8.      Use for research or instruction at for-profit institutions may or may not be consistent with the purposes of MSB and must be reviewed by administrative staff and/or the MDE.

9.      By signing this document, any and all users acknowledge there is no expectation of privacy at any level.  E-mail may be searched without warning.  Additionally, if the LAN/WAN is used to access personal e-mail accounts, those personal e-mail accounts become "searchable" per FRCP.  Any e-mail must be kept either in the active account or in the Archived account for a period of no less than five (5) days.  After five (5) days the e-mail may be deleted but may still be deemed "discoverable" per FRCP.

10.     At no time may any electronic communication or files be deleted once the party(ies) is (are) made aware of any intent for discovery or search.


**Deportment**

Everyone at MSB is responsible for their own conduct while at school, including their behavior on school computers and the wide area or local area networks.  Communications on any LAN/WAN can become public in nature and the use of the system will be provided to staff and students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner.  Therefore, in addition to the guideline and use policy provided above, the following is given as indications of expected appropriate student and staff conduct on MSB computers and access to the Internet.

- Be kind and polite.  Derogatory, defaming, and abusive or bullying language and messages (hate mail or "Cyber-Bullying, as examples) are strictly prohibited.  Once a message is released to the Internet it can reside there almost forever.

- Appropriate language is to be practiced at all times.

- The privacy of others is as valuable as your own.  Never reveal information about others.

- Do not use the Internet for illegal activity or what might be perceived as illegal activity.

- The internet is for educational and research purposes and, though it is expected there will be some personal use, do not use the privilege for personal or commercial gain.  The internet is to be used strictly for educational, research, leisure, or professional purposes.  That is, as an example, commercial uses are prohibited but legal recreational use is not.

- Students will post information about themselves only with permission and

supervision of a staff member. Additionally, the user agrees not to publish or willfully receive on or over the LAN or Internet any information which violates or infringes upon the rights of any other person or any information which would be considered abusive, profane, of a hazing or bullying nature, or sexually offensive to another individual, or which, without the approval of the system administration, contains any advertising or any solicitation of other users to subscribe to goods or services. The user agrees not to use the facilities and capabilities of the system to conduct any business or activity or solicit the performance of any activity which is prohibited by law.

- Do not use the Internet or the MSB computers for political lobbying.

- Do not waste the resources at your disposal.

- Do not download files without approval.

- Do not falsify your identity.

- If you are not authorized to go to a certain file or area do not attempt to access that site. These files or areas are restricted for a reason. Do not attempt to circumvent security measures or files.

- The use of cellular phones or any like-technology may <u>not</u> be used at any time to upload pictures or any MSB student in any manner; with or without permission.

Because the MSB access system is connected to other computer systems around the world, the user or the user's parent, if the user is under 18 years of age, specifically understands that the system administrator(s) and MSB do not have control of the content of information residing on these other systems. Though every effort is made to protect the user(s) through the use of firewalls and filters, users and the parents of minor age users are hereby advised that some systems may contain defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material previously unknown to the appointing authority. MSB does not condone the use of such materials and does not permit the access or usage of such materials in the school environment. Parents of minor users should be aware of the existence of such materials and that every effort will be made to prevent the downloading of such material or the exposure of the minor student to such materials. Again, it is for this reason, students up to and including the ninth grade will go through their teacher or residential education houseparent to exchange information on the Internet. Users knowingly bringing such materials as noted above into the school environment will be dealt with according to the discipline policies of MSB. That is, if material is brought into the school LAN which is categorized as noted above, that material will be considered as evidence of intent for the physical commission of the act. Additionally, any action by a user determined by the MSB administration, state, and/or federal law to constitute an inappropriate use of the Internet is strictly prohibited and may result in the termination of the right to access the LAN or Internet. The user specifically agrees not to submit, publish, or display on the MSB LAN or

Internet any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material; nor shall the user encourage the use of controlled materials. Additionally, transmission of material, information or software in violation of any local, state or federal law is prohibited and is a breach of the terms and conditions under which the user may have access to the system. MSB also adheres to CIPA and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure if, when, and where applicable.

**Monetary Responsibility**

MSB assumes no responsibility or liability for any charges incurred by the user. MSB will not be responsible for payment of any expenses incurred by the user as a direct or indirect result of Internet use. Students are prohibited from placing orders for merchandise or services over the Internet. The user may, however, gain the information necessary for ordering goods or services through the United States Postal Service and pursue that avenue. Additionally, staff members are advised to proceed cautiously.
The user specifically agrees to indemnify (pay) MSB and the system administrators (should personal time or expenses be involved) for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney's fees incurred by MSB or the system administrators relating to or arising out of any breach of this policy by the user.

**Uploading/Downloading Files**

Only public domain files and files in which the author has given express consent for online distribution (freeware or shareware) may be uploaded to the software libraries or hard drives and then only with permission. Any other software may not be uploaded. Any software having the purpose or result of damaging other members' files, accounts, or the MSB computers or WAN in general (e.g., viruses) is strictly prohibited. MSB reserves the right to refuse posting of files and to remove files. MSB reserves the right to immediately terminate access to the computers, the Internet, or LAN anyone who misuses any system or software libraries. Further, MSB makes no guarantee and does not endorse the performance of any software downloaded from the LAN or Internet.

No student or staff member shall intentionally cause damage to any equipment including hardware and software (See Vandalism Section, above, page 2) and is prohibited from committing any of the following (including but not limited to):

- Removing or exchanging any hardware or software component from any system

- Deleting, renaming, moving, copying or changing any file or its properties, other than his or her personally owned files

- Tampering with installed software and files

- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to files

- Attempting to change passwords

- Damaging the work of others

- Tampering with any hardware or installing personal software on school technology

- Violating copyright laws by unauthorized copying of software

- Installing, copying, or knowingly infecting a computer or computer system with a virus

- Destroying or deleting discoverable files

For staff and student alike, the consequence for willful disregard of any and/or all stated or implied indications above may or may not be to limited to paying for damages, denial of access to technology, suspension, and/or expulsion. In a free and democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship. However, that access may be denied if the individual purposefully denies others the right to that access. One of MSB's technology goals is to educate users by providing them with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet in ways appropriate to their education and information needs. Making the Internet available, however, carries with it the potential that some students might encounter information others have identified as controversial or potentially harmful and it is not always possible to predict where that information will appear. Staff will make every effort to guide and supervise students in the appropriate selection and use of electronic resources and to assure appropriate use and access to the Internet and use of the MSB Access System or any other artificial intelligence at the Mississippi School for the Blind. As evidence of that effort, the following is included in this AUP to provide further clarification. The following CIPA-Compliant Internet Safety policy is verbatim per the FCC-SLD except for the insertion of titles where indicated in the original document.

# CIPA-Compliant Internet Safety Policy
## For the Mississippi School for the Blind

**Introduction**

It is the policy of the Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

**Definitions**

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

**Access to Inappropriate Material**

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

**Inappropriate Network Usage**

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of MSB online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

**Education, Supervision and Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of MSB staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of Technology Coordinator or designated representatives.

The Technology Coordinator or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate training for students who use MSB's Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote MSB's commitment to:

a. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in MSB's Internet Safety Policy;

b. Student safety with regard to:

        i. safety on the Internet;

        ii. appropriate behavior while on online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and

        iii. cyberbullying awareness and response.

c. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the District's acceptable use policies.

End of the AUP narrative for the Mississippi School for the Blind.

# 2012-2013 MSB School Year
# Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
# Acknowledgment and Signature Page for
# All Staff

I agree with and will abide by the above Policy and Guidelines.

Printed Name: _____

Staff Signature:                                     Date:

_____     _____

→This sheet is to be detached and kept on file in a designated folder.  The AUP, itself, is to be retained by the staff member.

**Revised 5/4/12**