



# **Bridge School**

## **2022-2023 Bridge School Media Policies**

Bridge School recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve student learning and enhance the administration and operation of the school. To this end, we encourage the responsible use of computers; computer networks, including the Internet and the school's Google network; and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of Bridge School.

Because the Internet is an unregulated, worldwide vehicle for communication, information available to staff and students is impossible to control in entirety. Therefore, in order to uphold our community values, Bridge School adopts this policy governing the voluntary use of electronic resources and the Internet in order to provide guidance to teachers and students obtaining access to these resources on school-owned equipment and interactions that occur between students on social media platforms outside of school.

### *Bridge School Rights and Responsibilities*

It is the policy of Bridge School to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all online network activities by staff and students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, student, or other individual to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the network. Within this general policy, Bridge School recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the well-being of students in its charge. To this end, Bridge School retains the following rights and recognizes the following obligations:

1. Internet access by students will be relegated to school owned hardware.
2. Teachers will visually monitor the use of online activities in school. No student shall use a computer without a teacher present.
3. The school Google network administrator shall add and delete user accounts on the Google network when needed.
4. The school Google network administrator shall monitor the usage of users on the Google network.
5. The school Google network administrator shall provide internal and external controls as appropriate and feasible. Such controls shall include the right to determine who will have access to Bridge School-owned equipment and, specifically, to exclude those who do not

abide by the Bridge School's acceptable use policy or other policies governing the use of school facilities, equipment, and materials. Bridge School reserves the right to restrict online destinations through software or other means.

6. The school network administrator shall provide guidelines and make reasonable efforts to train staff and students in acceptable use and policies governing online communications.

#### *Staff Responsibilities*

1. Staff members who supervise students, control electronic equipment, or otherwise have occasion to observe student use of said equipment online shall make reasonable efforts to monitor the use of this equipment to assure that it conforms to the mission and goals of the Bridge School.
2. Staff should make reasonable efforts to become familiar with the Internet and its use so that effective monitoring, instruction, and assistance may be achieved.

#### *Acceptable Use*

1. All use of the Internet, including staff use of the school Google network, must be in support of educational and research objectives consistent with the mission and objectives of Bridge School.
2. Proper codes of conduct in electronic communication must be used. In groups and forums, giving out personal information is inappropriate. When using e-mail, extreme caution must always be taken in revealing any information of a personal nature.
3. Google network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.

#### *Unacceptable Use*

1. Student or staff use of the Google network for personal matters unrelated to school activities.
2. Neither students nor staff shall log on to another individual's Google network account EXCEPT for the Google network administrator(s).
3. No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others. Hardware and/or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
4. Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
5. The unauthorized installation of any software, including shareware and freeware, for use on Bridge School computers is prohibited.
6. Hate mail, chain letters, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited on the network.
7. Students shall not perpetrate harassment on the school network OR on non-school networks towards school students or employees. Harassment means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct including any incident conducted by electronic means based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family

member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability that has the purpose OR effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance OR access to school resources OR creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(26)(A).

8. Use of the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files (as determined by the system administrator or building administrator), or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network is prohibited.
9. Downloading, copying, otherwise duplicating, and/or distributing copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is prohibited, except that duplication and/or distribution of materials for educational purposes is permitted when such duplication and/or distribution would fall within the Fair Use Doctrine of the United States Copyright Law (Title 17, USC).
10. Use of the network for any unlawful purpose is prohibited.
11. Use of profanity, obscenity, racist terms, or other language that may be offensive to another user is prohibited.
12. Playing games is prohibited unless specifically authorized by a teacher for instructional purposes.
13. Establishing network or Internet connections to live communications, including voice and/or video (relay chat), is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the system administrator.

#### *Use of Personal Devices in School*

1. Students shall not carry personal electronic devices with them while during school. Any electronic device must be turned off and stored for the entirety of the school day in the student's backpack.
2. Staff may carry personal electronic devices on them during the school day in order to ensure access to emergency communication.
3. Staff must only use their personal electronic devices for work-related purposes, or emergency personal matters during the school day.

#### *Social Media*

1. Staff must never be "friends" or connect with current students on any social network while employed by Bridge School.
2. Staff must take reasonable effort to maintain a professional appearance on social media and must not post any content that negatively impacts the school's public appearance. '
3. No picture posted on a Bridge School social media account or on the school website will be done so with the intent of ridiculing, harassing, or embarrassing a child.
4. No picture will be tagged by any Bridge School employee.
5. Student and family names, addresses, phone numbers or other personal information will never be given without consent from parents (including local print media).
6. Pictures will be removed from social media by the request of parents or students.

7. Comments made on social media sites that are not in the spirit of Bridge School's mission will be removed.
8. No picture posted by Bridge School will promote or advertise for products, politics, or religion.
9. Bridge School promises to:
  - Intentionally and minfully think about how each post represents our school, our students, and our families.
  - Respect concerns of students and families.
  - Monitor comments.
  - Correct mistakes.

Bridge School will not post:

- Negative comments or offensive jokes.
- Compromising or questionable pictures.

#### *Disclaimer*

1. Bridge School cannot be held accountable for the information that is retrieved via the internet.
2. Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (18 USC 2510 et seq.), notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by this system for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. System administrators have access to all mail and will monitor messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
3. Bridge School will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by our own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained is at your own risk.
4. Bridge School makes no warranties (expressed or implied) with respect to:
  - the content of any advice or information received by a user, or any costs or charges incurred as a result of seeing or accepting any information; and
  - any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the user chooses to use his or her access to the network.
5. Bridge School reserves the right to change its policies and rules at any time.

*Updated: August 2021, Jennifer Grilly*