

Acceptable and Safe Use for Computing Technology (Letter to Parents)

Dear Parent/Guardian and Student:

The Durham District School Board and Henry Street High School are pleased to provide parents/guardians and students with information regarding computing technology available to students at school. Please read this letter and the accompanying Acceptable and Safe Use Procedure.

DDSB computing technology is made available to students to support their learning, research requirements, and career preparation. DDSB technologies allow all schools to offer Internet access to their students. The Internet is a vehicle for accessing a global network of information resources for teaching and learning. Students may use the Internet to locate and retrieve information and communicate learning with others.

Students are encouraged to report Cyber-bullying to parents/guardians and teachers. Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Cyber-bullying can happen through the use of e-mail, cell phone text, multi media messages, instant messaging, defamatory Web logs (Blogs), personal Web Sites, and on-line personal polling sites. It is a crime to publish a "defamatory libel" (i.e. writing something that is designed to insult a person or likely to injure a person's reputation by exposing him or her to hatred, contempt or ridicule). It is also a crime to repeatedly communicate with someone causing him or her to fear for his or her or someone else's safety. Students engaged in Cyber-bullying will be subject to discipline according to the Schools Code of Behaviour and Safe Schools Act. Police may be contacted.

Cyber-bullying often takes place off school property and/or outside school hours. Normally this cyber-bullying is not a school matter but a parent, community, and/or police matter. On occasion this type of Cyber-bullying can have an impact on the school and negatively affect safety and learning. When this type of Cyber-bullying affects the school climate it becomes a concern for school administrators and teachers.

Students are encouraged to be media literate. Internet resources may contain material that may be questionable, objectionable, or illegal. Students re-visiting unacceptable sites will be subject to discipline according to the Schools Code of Behaviour. Cellular phones (and other electronic signaling devices) are disruptive if they are activated in class. Incoming signals distract the student's attention away from the instruction and can interfere with both teaching and learning.

The DDSB utilizes Internet filtering software. This software blocks access to specific unacceptable sites known to contain violence, sexually explicit acts, hate crimes information, pornography, racist and other extremist viewpoints, cults, etc. No software is capable of blocking all unacceptable Internet sites. Teachers and students are instructed on the safe and acceptable use of the Internet and other DDSB computing technology. Teachers will supervise students' use of the Internet as they supervise student use of all other school resources. Students caught vandalizing school computer equipment will be subject to discipline according to the Schools Code of Behaviour and Safe Schools Act. Police may be contacted.

All students are expected to abide by the DDSB Acceptable and Safe Use Procedure included with this letter. Misuse and/or abuse of the facilities and resources are subject to consequences as defined and explained in their schools' Student Code of Behaviour. Use of the Internet is governed by the Regulation 5500, the Student Code of Conduct, which states that "a student may be suspended or expelled from his or her school, expelled from attending any school in Ontario, and/or prohibited from engaging in school-related activities if the student commits an infraction of the Code of Conduct while he or she is at school, engaged in a school-related activity, or engaged in conduct that has a relationship to the school, school community,

In addition, use is governed by all relevant federal (e.g. Copyright, Freedom of Information, Protection of Privacy Act, the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, Canadian Human Rights Act), provincial (e.g. Education Act, Child and Family Services Act, Safe School Act, the Health and Safety Act, Human Rights Code), DDSB (e.g. Policies and Procedures, Central File 06/07-28), and local school (e.g. School Code of Behaviour) laws and regulations. Use of DDSB computing technology for unacceptable, illegal, political or private commercial purposes is strictly prohibited. The onus is on the user to know and to comply with these laws and regulations.

We look forward to providing students with the opportunity to use the school's computing and information technology facilities and resources in a safe and meaningful way.

Please sign and return the portion below.

I have read the Acceptable and Safe Use Procedure - Letter to Parents/Guardians and Students and the Secondary School Acceptable and Safe Use Procedure. I understand that if I do not follow the rules and procedures outlined therein, my access to computing and information technology facilities and resources or the Internet may be terminated. I may face consequences in keeping with laws and regulations. Police may be contacted.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Home Room _____

Parents/Guardians Signature _____