Stanislaus County Office of Education
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MARTIN G. PETERSEN, Superintendent

USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

STAFF HANDBOOK

October 1, 1998

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TO: All Staff

FROM: Martin G. Petersen, Superintendent

RE: Staff Handbook on the Use of Electronic Information Resources

We are pleased to announce that **Internet** and other electronic information services are now available to students and staff in Stanislaus County Office of Education.

Stanislaus County Office of Education strongly believes in the educational value of such electronic services and recognizes their potential to support its curriculum and student learning in facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Stanislaus County Office of Education will make every effort to protect students and teachers from any misuses or abuses as a result of your experiences with an information service. Inappropriate and/or illegal interaction with the information service is strictly prohibited.

Please review the Network Policy carefully, sign the Agreement for Use of Electronic Information Resources Agreement and return to Sandy Anderson, Personnel #000, by November 1, 1998.

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Martin G. Petersen, Superintendent

**Board Policy available upon request.*

USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES
NETWORK USE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of Stanislaus County Office of Education (SCOE) Wide Area Network (Network), which includes Internet access, is to advance and promote excellence and research in education in Stanislaus County. The Network is intended to assist in the communication, collaboration, and exchange of information in and among SCOE departments, schools, school district offices, the California Department of Education, institutions of higher learning, and other educational entities. SCOE's goals for the use of the Wide Area Network are to allow the shared use of information resources between departments, support SCOE business operations, promote innovation and educational excellence, and provide information resources for staff.

ACCEPTABLE USE

Successful operation of the Network requires that users regard each as a shared resource, and cooperate to form a community of diverse interests with the common purpose of advancing excellence in education in SCOE. It is therefore imperative that users conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical, and polite manner while using the Network.

Inappropriate use may result in revocation or suspension of access privileges. The administration or staff of SCOE may request that the Network System Administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

SCOE reserves the right to monitor all traffic on the Wide Area Network or the SCOE Internet connection.

LEGAL ISSUES

The California computer crime bill (1979) added section 502 to the *Penal Code* making it a felony to intentionally access any computer system or network for the purpose of:

- devising or executing any scheme or artifice to defraud or extort or
- obtaining money, property, or services with false or fraudulent intent, representations, or promises.

It is also a felony to maliciously access, alter, delete, damage or destroy any computer system, computer network, computer program, or data. Some examples of offenses are removing another user's accounts, changing other user's passwords, using an unauthorized account, damaging files, altering the system, using the system for personal gain, using illegally or damaging SCOE property. Penalties include maximum fines of $5000 and/or imprisonment in the state prison for up to three years or the county jail for up to one year. Anyone committing acts of this kind will face legal action, and SCOE disciplinary procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Users shall accept the responsibility for the following:

- monitor all material received through the access account.
- disallow copyrighted software of any kind from entering the Network from any source unless otherwise authorized.
- prevent from entering the Wide Area Network, all pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to its integrity.
- use newsgroups in a manner appropriate to good taste and legal guidelines and restrict their utilization to business or educational purposes.
- maintain the integrity of the private e-mail system.
- refrain from engaging in games on the Network.
- to the best of one's ability, refrain from using the Network or in any way that would disrupt its use by others.
- if a security problem is discovered, immediately notify your supervisor or the Network System Administrator.
- report all violations of privacy and misuse of the Network to the Network System Administrator.

PERSONAL USE

The use of the SCOE Wide Area Network and Internet connection is a privilege. Users should strive for the most responsible use of the institutional resources for purposes related to accessing, sharing, and creating

information and collaborating with other members of this and other communities for scholarly and work-related communications. While occasional social communications using e-mail are not disallowed by this policy, limiting the number of purely personal electronic messages and files is appropriate and reasonable. Unreasonable and excessive personal use of Internet will lead to disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal).

COPYRIGHT

According to the Copyright Act of 1976, "Fair Use" means that information legally found on the Internet may be used for scholarly purposes. Information may not be plagiarized or sold.

PROHIBITED USES

This policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior by users. Misuse may come in many forms; it is commonly viewed as any transmission(s) sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, or inappropriate language.

SCOE characterizes the following as unacceptable in which an individual:

- uses the Network for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities. [Illegal activities shall be defined as a violation of local, state, and/or federal laws. Inappropriate use shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the Network, and/or purpose and goals. Obscene activities shall be defined as a violation of generally accepted social standards for use of a publicly-owned and operated communication vehicle.]
- uses the Network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyrights or other contracts violating such matters as institutional or third party copyright, license agreements and other contracts
- intentionally disrupts Network traffic or crashes the Network and connected systems
- degrades or disrupts equipment or system performance
- uses SCOE computing resources for commercial activities, financial gain, political lobbying, or fraud
- steals data, equipment, or intellectual property
- gains unauthorized access to others' files or vandalizes the data of another user
- gains or seeks to gain unauthorized access to resources or entities
- uses the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, or promotes unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or SCOE policy
- uses intellectual property of others without permission
- uses harassing, abusive, or obscene language
- annoys, harasses, or intentionally offends
- introduces computer viruses
- forges electronic mail messages or uses an account owned by another user
- wastes resources
- invades the privacy of others
- possesses data in any form (including hard copy or disk) which might be considered a violation of these rules
- sending chain letter e-mail

Consequences of Violations

SCOE has the right to (1) monitor user activity in any form that it sees fit to maintain the integrity of the Wide Area Network and (2) restrict or terminate Network access at any time for any reason.

Consequences of violations include but are not limited to the following:

- suspension of Internet access
- revocation of Internet access
- suspension of Wide Area Network privileges
- revocation of Wide Area Network privileges
- suspension of computer access
- revocation of computer access
- legal action and prosecution
- financial liability for loss of network resources

- disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal)

POLICY REVIEW

The Stanislaus County Office of Education Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee will determine whether specific uses of the SCOE Wide Area Network are consistent with this policy.

STANISLAUS COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
AGREEMENT
USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

Please read this Agreement carefully. When signed by you, **it becomes a legally binding contract**.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **Personal Responsibility.** As a representative of the Stanislaus County Office of Education, I will accept personal responsibility for reporting any misuse of the Network to the Network System Administrator. Misuse may come in many forms, but it is commonly viewed as any transmission(s) sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism and inappropriate language, other issues described below.

2. **Acceptable Use.** My use of the Network must be in support of education and research or SCOE business operations and must be consistent with the goals and objectives of SCOE**.** I am personally responsible for the use of my account at all times.

   a. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with rules appropriate to that network.
   b. Transmission of any material in violation of United States or other state regulations is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret.
   c. Engaging in commercial activities by for-profit institutions is not acceptable.
   d. Use of the Network for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.

3. **Privileges.** The use of the electronic information system is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of my account. Each person who receives an account will receive instruction as to proper behavior and use of the network. The administration or staff of SCOE may request that the Network System Administrator deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts.

4. **Guidelines.** I will abide by guidelines that include but are not limited to the following:

   a. BE POLITE. Never send, or encourage others to send, abusive messages.
   b. USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE. Remember that you are a representative of SCOE on a non-private system. You may be alone with your computer, but what you say and do can be viewed globally! Never swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities of any kind are strictly forbidden.
   c. PRIVACY. Do not reveal any personal information, your home address or personal phone numbers or those of other employees. Report to the Network System Administrator any person who asks for personal information or violates your privacy.
   d. ELECTRONIC MAIL. Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to your supervisor.
   e. DISRUPTIONS. Do not use the Network in any way that would disrupt use of the Network by others. Do not unnecessarily download huge files. Take only the information you want and need.
   f. GAMES. Do not play games with others on the Network.
   g. MISUSE. Report to the Network System Administrator any misuse of the Network.
   h. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:
      - Keep messages brief.
      - Minimize spelling errors and make sure your message is easy to understand and read.
      - Use accurate and descriptive titles for your articles.
      - Get the most appropriate audience for your message, not the widest.
      - Remember that humor and satire is very often misinterpreted.
      - Remember that if you post to multiple groups, specify all groups in a single message.
      - Cite references for any facts you present or material you use.
      - Forgive spelling and grammar errors of others.
      - Keep signatures brief.
      - Remember that all network users are people who deserve consideration. Don't "attack" correspondents; persuade them with facts.
      - Post only to groups you know.

5. **Services**. SCOE makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. SCOE will not be responsible for any damages suffered while on this system. These damages include loss of data as a result of delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the system or by your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the information system is at your own risk. SCOE specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy of information obtained through its services.

6. **Security**. Security on any computer system is a high priority. If you identify a security problem, notify the Network System Administrator immediately. Never demonstrate the problem to other users. All use of the system must be under your own account. Any misuse of your account is your responsibility.

7. **Vandalism.** Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, or that of agencies, or networks that are connected to the system. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses, disrupting or limiting access to network resources, or using the network to make unauthorized entry to any other machine accessible via the network. Any violation may result in the loss of your network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal referral.

8. **Updating Your Account.** Notify the Network System Administrator of any changes in your account information.

DEFINITIONS

The Internet
The Internet is a worldwide network of computer networks. It is comprised of thousands of separately administered networks of many sizes and types. Each of these networks is comprised of as many as tens of thousands of computers; the total number of individual users of the Internet is in the millions. In the United States, the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNet) comprises the Internet "backbone" (a high-speed network that connects key regions across the country).

Physical Connections
For the Internet to exist there must be connections between computers and agreements on how they are to communicate. Connections can consist of any of a variety of communication media or methods: metal wires, microwave links, packet radio or fiber optic cables.

These connections are usually established within areas or regions by the particular networking organization with authority or economic interest in that area. For example, a university academic department may lay Ethernet cable to connect its personal computers and workstations into a local area network (LAN), which is then connected to the cables the campus laid to connect its buildings together, which is then linked to cables laid by a regional network, which itself ties into the NSFNet backbone, the infrastructure for which was funded by the U.S. government. Therefore the path between any two points on the Internet often traverses physical connections that are administered by a variety of independent authorities.

Communications Protocols
For disparate computers (from personal computers to mainframes) to communicate with other computers over a network, there must be agreements on how that should occur. These agreements are called communication protocols. Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) is the current standard. These protocols define how certain applications are to be accomplished: electronic messaging, online connections, and the transfer of files.

Internet Services
The three basic Internet applications of electronic mail, remote login, and file transfer are also building blocks of more sophisticated applications that usually offer increased functionality and ease of network use. Tools such as Gopher, WAIS, and World Wide Web go beyond the three basic Internet functions to make information on the network easier to locate and use. Gopher uses a series of menus to organize and automate access to information and other online systems wherever they reside on the Internet. The Wide Area

Information Servers (WAIS) project seeks to provide a common interface to a multitude of Internet databases. World Wide Web is a hypertext interface to Internet information resources. This trend toward more powerful, user-friendly networked information resource access systems is likely to continue as the Internet grows and matures.

Internet Future
The backbone infrastructure for the United States portion of the Internet (the NSFNet, or the Interim NREN) is largely supported through federal government funding. For this reason, use of the network has been limited to non-profit research and educational uses, and commercial companies have established networking arrangements that avoid using the NSFNet. Most recently, however, dialogues have begun about commercialization and privatization of the NSFNet infrastructure. The full effects of such a move on current Internet users, especially research and educational institutions, has yet to be seen. One certainty is that the breadth of information and the services offered on the Internet will continue to burgeon.

SCOE Wide Area Network
The SCOE Wide Area Network (is) one of the networks that make up the Internet. The network makes sharing communication and information among SCOE, the schools, and the district offices possible. The network will support activities that have educational value for administration, teachers and students.

STANISLAUS COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
AGREEMENT
USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

STAFF

I understand and will abide by the provisions and conditions of this agreement. I understand that any violations of the above provisions may result in disciplinary action, the revoking of my user account, and appropriate legal action. I also agree to report any misuse of the information system to the Network System Administrator. I understand that misuse may come in many forms, but may be viewed as any transmission(s) sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language, or other issues described in the Network Use Policy.

Staff Name (please print): _____

Staff Signature _____ *Date* _____

Return agreement to Personnel #000.

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