Acceptable Use Policy for Technology
Parish Schools and Catholic Academies within the Diocese of Brooklyn
September 2021

1. <u>Purpose:</u>

Throughout the years, the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn have maintained a steadfast dedication to educational excellence and Catholic culture rooted in faith, service, and personal responsibility. The Diocese of Brooklyn is committed to provide programs that enable all students to develop effective communication skills while striving for academic excellence.

The Diocese of Brooklyn is dedicated to the utilization of technology today to produce moral, innovative, and creative leaders for tomorrow.

Existing and emerging digital technologies present new opportunities and challenges for our Catholic Academy and Parish School communities. The Acceptable Use Policy for Technology shall apply to all students, faculty, administrators, staff, and volunteers who are allowed access to school/academy technology resources. Outside or personal uses may be governed by this policy as well, where applicable.

The Superintendent delegates to the principals the responsibility for implementing regulations and procedures for the appropriate use of technology and internet resources that follow these guidelines.

1.   All persons will use technology in a courteous, appropriate, respectful, and ethical manner in accord with our Catholic faith.

2.   Students will use school/academy owned technology for appropriate learning purposes under the supervision of the principal and classroom teacher.

3.   Students, employees, and visitors will use school/academy technology in accordance with all policies and procedures of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

2. <u>Scope of Use</u>:

The technology vision for the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn is such that its use supports the Catholic Church's overall mission. We are aware that the digital world allows 24 hour access, anywhere, anytime. This policy applies to the use of technology inside school/academy but may in certain instances apply to personal use outside of the school/academy. When personal outside use of a technology causes a disruption to teaching, harms or interferes in the rights of others in the school/academy community or otherwise violates all or part of this AUP, then these may be subject to disciplinary measures found within.

3. **<u>Definitions of Technology</u>:**

     a. Technology is used as a general term for devices and software used in the creation, transfer, storage, reproduction, or other such interaction with digital or analog content. It also encompasses the communication protocols used in relation to such content.

     b. This includes all existing, as well as, emerging technologies. These include but are not limited to:
- Cell Phones, Smart Phones
- Storage Devices (USB Flash Drives, External/Internal Hard Disk Drives, Cloud Storage)
- Computing Devices (Laptops/Desktops, Tablets, Netbooks, Chromebooks, etc.)
- Portable Entertainment Systems (gaming systems, audio/video players)
- Recording Devices (digital or analogue audio/video/photo capture devices)
- Any other convergent technologies (Social Networking, email, instant messaging, etc.)

     c. The Diocese of Brooklyn requires all schools and academies to publish the following statement on web portals, in student/parent handbooks, faculty /staff handbooks, agendas, etc.:

     "The use of technology is permitted on school premises under limited conditions as authorized by the Principal for the sole purpose of enhancing academic achievement while respecting the dignity and safety of all members of the Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Academy community."

4. **<u>Responsibilities of User</u>:**

The schools and academies of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn will make every effort to provide a safe environment for learning with technology including internet filtering and safeguards in accordance with CIPA regulations. CIPA requires that schools and academies create a policy addressing the following:
- Access by minors to inappropriate matter on the internet
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication
- Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Measures restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them

As part of this compliance, an Internet Safety Curriculum must be implemented in all schools/academies as of Fall 2018. All students are required to participate in this program to educate and empower them to make their internet experiences safe and responsible. Parish Schools and Catholic Academies within the Diocese of Brooklyn are also required to implement the Diocesan Cyber-Bullying Policy published in the Administrative Manual. The goal is to educate students on how to avoid dangerous, inappropriate, or unlawful online behavior and protect them from being the victim of such behavior as well. The students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school/academy community are granted the privilege of using technology. With this privilege comes the responsibility for appropriate use.

In using the information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways, the following conditions of being a digital citizen within the Diocese of Brooklyn are expected:

- **Respect One's Self**
  - Public names should be appropriate
  - Be mindful of any and all content you post including photos, personal views, comments, personal information, etc.
  - Avoid seeking out and/or viewing inappropriate content
  - Do not engage in potentially harmful activities such as communicating with persons unknown to you or internet challenges
- **Respect Others**
  - Be mindful of comments, posts, photos or any content directed toward or including others
  - Refrain from engaging in inflammatory, harassing, or any other such disrespectful behavior
  - Do not perpetuate inappropriate content by sharing it with or sending it to others
  - Warn others of potentially disturbing or harmful content that should be avoided
- **Protect One's Self and Others**
  - Report any and all cyber-abuse committed against you or others to parents, teachers and/or administrators
  - Keep groups with friends private to avoid potentially inappropriate or dangerous content and communications from unknown sources
- **Respect Intellectual Property**
  - Cite sources when using any content not originally authored by you

Members of Catholic Academy and Parish School communities must remember that when telecommunicating with individuals, groups, or institutions, you are doing so as an individual. You should not represent yourself, your views, ideas, questions, or actions as representing the Catholic Academy or Parish School you are associated with without the expressed permission of the principal.

5. <u>Security of Technology</u>:

The Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, repair or replacement of any technology devices that are brought onto school/academy property, whether it is lost, stolen, damaged, or confiscated.

Security on any computer system is a high priority. If you believe you can identify a security issue, you must notify a system administrator, principal, or teacher and not disclose the problem to others in any way. Although there are safeguards in place to protect all users from inappropriate content, we are not responsible for failures in filtering that result in a bypass of our program and/or access to objectionable content. If any inappropriate content bypasses these safeguards, any parties involved should turn off the monitor and report the security breach immediately to a system administrator, teacher or the principal.

Additionally, member of the school/academy community shall not:

- Use another's credentials for any reason
- Gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to Diocesan or school/academy computers or computer systems.
- Download or install any software application without prior authorization.

6. Technology Use Guidelines:

a. Appropriate Use/Educational Purpose

It is the policy of the Catholic Schools and Academies of the Diocese of Brooklyn that technology be used to support learning and enhance instruction. Technology will be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner, consistent with the moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

b. Communications (Teachers/Parents/Students)

Electronic and/or Digital communication between teachers and parents should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and utilize only school/academy sanctioned communication methods. These methods include:

- Teacher school/academy web page
- Teacher school/academy email
- Teacher school/academy phone #
- Teacher created, school/academy approved, educationally focused networking sites

Student addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses are provided to faculty solely for use in contacting parents about student academic performance. This information may not be used for any other purpose by faculty or staff without the explicit permission of the Principal.

c. Examples of Unacceptable Uses of Technology

Users are not to:

- Use technology to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual. Refer to the Diocesan bullying policy.
- Post, publish, reproduce, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff or any other organization.
- Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any students, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the principal.
- Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual and the principal.
- Attempt to circumvent system security.

- Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming sites, except for educational purposes under teacher supervision.
- Violate license agreements, reproduce or distribute copyrighted material, protected media or otherwise bypass licensing security.
- Use technology for any illegal activity.
- Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school/academy or system employees
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school/academy or system in the community.
- Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal, and/or state laws. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material and threatening or obscene material.

d. Administrative Rights (To monitor use of technology)

The school/academy reserves the right to monitor both student and employee use of technology and computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Catholic Academies and Parish Schools within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn reserve the right to amend or add to this policy at any time without notice.

e. Personal use of Social Media (Teachers, Students)

This section refers to the personal use of social media. This includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat or any other such medium.

All references to school/academy personnel, students and/or any member of the school/academy community in technology related mediums such as web pages or email which is deemed to be conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or academy are violations of this policy

Any communication with current students by faculty, staff or administration is strictly forbidden on any personal social networking site. Personal posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Representation of the school/academy in whole or part on any personal posts and/or communication is prohibited.

f. Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to damage and/or destroy hardware or software systems, or the information of any other user. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation, distribution, proliferation or conspiracy of malicious software. If equipment is damaged in the course of actions taken by an individual, whether on or off campus use, that individual assumes all responsibility for any and all damages and associated costs thereof.

g. Technology Use Outside of School/Academy or School/Academy-Owned Devices

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyberbullying, inappropriate, defamatory, or content found to be injurious to a school/academy community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of school/academy premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the school/academy. All instances of such behavior must be reported immediately to the administration, who will investigate the matter and enforce the consequences deemed appropriate.

7. <u>Policy Violations:</u>

Violation of this policy in whole or in part may result in any or all of the following and will be issued at the discretion of the school/academy principal:
- Loss of use/privileges of school/academy technology.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and /or legal action by the school/academy, civil authorities, and/or other involved parties.
- Compensation for damages, both physical and punitive, incurred due to actions in violation of this AUP

8. <u>Distance Learning:</u>

Distance learning which is facilitated by a Parish School or Catholic Academy within the Diocese of Brooklyn is bound by all parts of this AUP. As distance learning requires the use of other mediums such as teleconferencing platforms, virtual classrooms, digital file transfer and online work, there are other factors that need to be addressed.

 a. <u>**Device Usage**</u> – The use of school/academy or personal devices for distance learning is allowed. It is recommended that all school/academy issued accounts only be used for schoolwork purposes and that those accounts are signed out of after work is completed. All usage is governed by this policy.

 b. <u>**Video/Audio Conferencing**</u> – Video or audio-conferencing platforms may be used to facilitate class meetings and communication between teachers and students for teaching and group work. When using these platforms, participants must remember to conduct themselves in a professional manner commensurate with behavior expected in a physical classroom. Entering meetings other than those you are explicitly invited to by the coordinator (teacher, principal, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Trying to circumvent the security of a meeting, "hijacking" a presentation or displaying any objectionable content during a meeting is a direct violation of this policy and subject to the disciplinary actions contained within. Recording of video/audio conferences is also prohibited.

 c. <u>**File Transfer/Submission**</u> – The transmittal of files may be required at times for teachers to provide and students to submit work. The willful transfer of objectional material, malicious content or any other such transmissions is a violation of this policy.

d. Learning Platforms – The use of learning platforms such as ThinkCentral, Learn360, Mathletics, Microsoft 365, Google Classroom, Pearson(Saava) Realize, iReady and others is for the sole purpose of supporting and furthering the education of students. Any use of these platforms for any other reason may be considered a violation of this policy.

Any use or misuse of the technology provided for distance learning that interferes with the education of students or the operations of the school/academy is a violation of this policy.

NOTE:
Students will not be given access to school/academy technology without an appropriately completed and signed acknowledgment form on file in the school/academy office.