

# School District 81

## Electronic Communications Access

The capacity of new electronic communications and information technologies to assist students in learning has grown significantly during the past few years. Knowledge, skills and understanding related to these technologies is becoming an essential part of a well-rounded education. Recognizing these facts, School District 81 has made the provision of access to such tools a priority.

District Internet services allow the use of a great range of valuable resources not otherwise available. Museums, news services, reference works, ongoing projects and other valuable sources of information all now come within the reach of Fort Nelson's students. The District has also established an internal electronic communication system (FirstClass) and shared network folders for the exchange of information, assignments, and local documents among students, teachers, administrators and other staff members.

Taken together, these environments expose students to the complete set of computer-based communication tools used in Education, Government, Business and Industry around the world. They allow the development of necessary skills while supporting and adding interest to the process of learning.

As with most major developments, the introduction of these technologies into schools is not without an element of risk. The Internet is not designed exclusively for the use of minors. While its use in District schools will be subject to close supervision, it is possible that students may occasionally access inappropriate material either deliberately or by accident. Some of what is available for viewing is not suitable for minors. (The use of FirstClass communication system involves limited risk since it is under the exclusive control of the District.)

It is appropriate then, that the following are required before individual access to electronic communications:

1. A signed statement of parental consent indicating:
  - the level of service to which they consent
  - acknowledgment that they understand the conditions and expectations related to the use of access
2. An agreement signed by the student acknowledging that he/she understands the expectations for the use of the Internet and FirstClass and is prepared to abide by them

**School District 81**  
**Electronic Communications Access**  
**Guidelines**

The electronic communication services provided by School District 81 are intended to support the educational program of students, District Schools, and the District. **They make up a shared resource.**

It is expected that those permitted to use District communication services will agree:

1. To behave in a moral, ethical and legal way while using these services.  
*This includes respect for copyright related to electronic documents and software.*
2. To demonstrate an understanding that rules for behaviour in school apply to behaviour online.  
*Standards of respect for others, cooperation with those responsible for maintaining services, use of language, etc. do not change when one enters the electronic environment.*
3. To use access for educational purposes.  
*Access is not intended for commercial or social use (social networking).*
4. To share their knowledge with other users seeking assistance.  
*Those using communication services form a sort of community – those with knowledge can contribute to the well-being of the community by helping others as they have at some time been helped.*
5. To respect the privacy of others.  
*This includes not tampering with the mail, files, or accounts of others; not using the accounts of others for access (with or without their knowledge); and not redistributing private communications to discussion groups without the permission of the author.*
6. To make a sincere effort not to use access in such a way as to interfere with the use of others.  
*This includes such things as checking electronic mailboxes regularly, deleting unnecessary mail, not downloading large files during peak times, etc.*
7. To take full responsibility for the use of accounts and passwords granted to them.

### **Examination of User Files/User Privacy**

A System Administrator has the responsibility to attempt to ensure that services are being used in keeping with the Guidelines. It is also his/her responsibility to guard the privacy of users.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that an account is being used in violation of the Guidelines, a System Administrator may examine the files of a user. Should a violation be found to have taken place, the System Administrator will take appropriate action. Penalties may involve the suspension or elimination of an account. It may also involve reporting the infraction to a School Administrator for further action.

The contents of files examined will be held in confidence by the System Administrator with the exception that information may be forwarded to other school or District authorities, or parents/guardians in the case of a violation.

Decisions of a System Administrator and other authorities as they apply to the use of communication services are subject to the appeal processes which apply to other decisions affecting students.

### **Excluded Use**

It is not possible to specifically list all behaviours and practices which are considered inappropriate. The District relies on individual users to apply responsible judgment to the use of Communications Access. The following list does not include all inappropriate uses but should provide users with some general principles to assist them in forming their judgment of what is appropriate. (This list duplicates some items identified above.)

District accounts and related passwords are the responsibility of the account holder. They may not be transferred to or used by anyone other than the individual to whom the account has been given.

District services may not be used to:

1. Send or retrieve material or information of an illegal or immoral nature. This includes accessing web pages or participating in any Internet discussions or e-mail concerned with bullying, illegal activities, racism, hate, violence, harassment, pornography, sexually explicit material, drugs or foul language. If any such content appears, the user will exit it immediately and make no attempt to save, print, forward, or respond to such material.
2. Access or transmit material or information related to the acquisition, construction or use of explosives, explosive devices or prohibited weapons.
3. Exchange files in violation of copyright laws. The district is not responsible for any copyright violations that a user may incur.
4. Participate in activities that consume excessive or continuous network bandwidth, unless they are educationally related. This includes access to Internet radio stations, or video services (typically referred to as "streaming" audio or video); multi-player network

gaming; download large files, such as movie or music files; or act as a file server to Internet users by sharing movies, music files, software or other files from the desktop (i.e. Kazaa, Morpheus, LimeWire, etc.).

5. Participate in social networking activities such as; MSN, Webchat, Facebook, Bibo, Twitter, and other similar live interactive forums not controlled directly by the District without the specific permission of a representative of the District (e.g. teacher, administrator, etc) for a specific purpose and time period
6. Conduct commercial business except with the permission of the District received in advance.
7. Access e-mail accounts not provided by the school district. Logging on to an external e-mail account (hotmail.com, yahoo.com, NWTel, etc) bypasses the anti-virus protection provided by both the PLNet Internet gateway and the school district's local network. If you must use an external e-mail account, any attachments associated with the account must be scanned for viruses.

Once more, it is the responsibility of users to operate within Appropriate Use Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the teacher to supervise student use of the resources. Should there be any doubt as to whether a practice or behaviour is appropriate, users and/or sponsor teacher should contact a site Administrator or the System Administrator before engaging in it.

#### **Violations of Appropriate Use**

Consequences for individuals violating Appropriate Use Guidelines vary depending on the nature and seriousness of the violation. They may involve:

- The suspension or cancellation of access. (This can be a serious problem for students who require electronic communication to complete course or project work.)
- The forwarding of a report to a student's Teacher, and subsequently to parents or guardians.
- The forwarding of a report to the Administrator of a student's school for further disciplinary action.

*\* Applicants for access to electronic communication services in the District should retain a copy of this document for reference or can obtain a copy from the district website (<http://www.sd81.bc.ca>).*

Request for School District 81  
Electronic Communications Access

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Services Requested:

Internet Access and storage space

FirstClass Account

I have read and understand the Guidelines for use of the services requested and agree to respect them if I am granted access. (A signature in the case of younger students indicates that an adult has interpreted the Guidelines to the student in terms that the student has understood - and that the student agrees to use services based on that understanding). I also understand that Acceptable Use Guidelines may change from time-to-time and agree to take responsibility for remaining aware of these changes.

Has the Applicant ever been refused access or had access suspended or revoked anywhere in the District?

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I request that my son/daughter/ward be granted access to District 81 communication services under the conditions and Guidelines outlined.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicants, or parents or guardians with questions concerning this application should contact or Patti Burt, District Vice Principal of Technolog at 774-6958 or <pburt@sd81.bc.ca> for general and technical information.