

## **QUESTAR III COMPUTER NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

### **I. Statement of Intent**

Questar III is committed to providing technology to facilitate student learning, to promote effective teaching and collaboration among staff, and to achieve efficiencies in operations. The Questar III Board of Education also recognizes that computer networks, software applications, and the multitude of new technologies will allow students to be better prepared to live, work and be successful in their local – and global – worlds and allow Questar III to conduct its business in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

### **II. Definitions**

The following definitions shall apply to this policy and to any regulations, agreements or guidelines concerning the Network:

- A. The term “computer network” or “Network” includes, individually and collectively: all computer hardware and support equipment and facilities including but not limited to desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, smartphones, and electronic readers; all computer software applications; online databases; web pages; electronic mail; video conferencing; still emerging features and uses of computers; the Internet; world wide web; chat rooms; news groups; bulletin boards; blogs; and any such other means or method employed to facilitate the transmission of electronic data and communications.
- B. The term “educational purposes” includes but is not limited to use of the computer network for classroom activities related to approved course curriculum, educational research, professional or career development, and such other learning and self-discovery activities that are consistent with Questar III’s mission and goals.
- C. The term “business purposes” means the use of the computer network for a Questar III business purpose including but not limited to financial reporting, administrative recordkeeping, generating educational reports, reports of services, and any use of the Network to support the operation of Questar III and its programs and services.

D. The term “copyrighted materials” refers to any original works fixed in any tangible medium of expression, which can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or indirectly, or with the aid of a machine or device, in which a property right is recognized and sanctioned by law for a limited period, with the sole and exclusive privilege of controlling and multiplying copies of the same and publishing and selling them. Such materials may include:

1. Literary works;
2. Musical works, including accompanying words;
3. Dramatic works, including any accompanying music;
4. Pantomimes and choreographic works;
5. Pictorial, graphic, and sculptured works;
6. Motion picture and other audiovisual works;
7. Sound recordings;
8. Architectural works and
9. Software programs.

The term “copyright infringement” means reproducing work that is protected by a copyright without the permission of the owner.

E. The term “prohibited purposes” includes, but is not limited to use of the Network for:

1. Offering or providing goods or services for sale for personal benefit or profit;
2. Personal or business advertisements, solicitations and/or promotions that are not related to the Questar III educational program;
3. The uploading or downloading of destructive programs including but not limited to viruses and/or self-replicating codes;
4. The uploading or downloading of inappropriate software or applications, whether or not in the public domain (e.g. “free software” or “Apps”);
5. Partisan political activity, including political lobbying and fundraising;
6. Constitutionally prohibited religious activity, including religious advocacy and fundraising;
7. Any use, observation, transmission, duplication or creation of obscene materials. The term “obscene” refers to verbal, written, graphic, pictorial, visual, and other means of presenting materials that violate generally accepted social and community standards in the use of a publicly-owned and operated communication vehicle. Obscene material appeals to prurient interest, is utterly without redeeming social importance, goes beyond customary limits of

candor in description or representation, is characterized by patent offensiveness and is pornographic, indecent, vulgar and salacious;

8. Copyright infringement;
9. Sharing passwords;
10. Reading, deleting, modifying, copying, or otherwise interfering with the electronic mail of another user of the computer network;
11. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail;
12. Unauthorized use of personal software;
13. Use of another's name to log on to the computer network, with or without the use of a password;
14. Attempting to access or accessing areas of the computer network to which the user has not been granted access;
15. Intentionally evading, changing or exceeding disk resource quotas, unless otherwise permitted;
16. Transmission of any material, data or software in violation of law or district policy, rule or regulation;
17. Vandalism. The term "vandalism" means the willful or ignorant destruction or harm to the computer network, district equipment, or materials or data of another user of the computer network or any other individual, organization or computer network connected to the Internet;
18. Tampering with or misusing the computer network in an unauthorized manner;
19. Illegal or unlawful conduct or purposes or promotion thereof. The terms "illegal" or "unlawful" mean a violation of the laws, rules and regulations of the United States of America, the State of New York, or a local government within the jurisdiction of Questar III;
20. The sending of an annoying or unnecessary electronic message to a large number of people;
21. Harassment. Harassment is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse. It may take the form of bullying, taunting or intimidation – including cyberbullying - and may be based upon the targeted individual's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, gender or sexual identity; or associations or friendships.
22. Electronically transmitting information not in the public domain, that reveals personally identifying characteristics or information about oneself or another;
23. Promotion or encouragement of the use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal or controlled substance;
24. On-line shopping, banking or other commercial activities not related to Questar III.
25. Unauthorized entry or access to the Questar III or another network or website (e.g. "hacking");

26. The unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding students;
27. Any conduct or activity prohibited by Questar III policy, rule or regulation;
28. Any purposes or activity unrelated to the instructional, administrative, operational, extra-curricular or co-curricular activities of Questar III.

### III. Access to the Network

- A. Questar III endeavors to securely provide technology resources to its students and staff to enhance learning and to improve productivity. Such resources are provided to staff for Questar III educational or Questar III business purposes and shall only be accessed when utilizing Questar III-issued equipment. Such resources are provided to students for educational purposes. Students and employees may be provided restricted access to the Network by being designated as Network users, subject to the use requirements in this policy.
- B. Incorporation of technology into the classrooms and offices of Questar III requires that the Network be protected. All users of the Network have responsibility to assure that their individual use reflects the business needs and values of the organization, does not jeopardize the Network's operation, and does not place Questar III or its students at risk.
- C. Each designated Network user will be issued a "login" (user) name and an initial password. User passwords should be changed upon initial access and periodically thereafter as required by the Network administrator, in order to enhance security of access to the user's account. Users shall be responsible at all times for the proper use of the account assigned to them.
- D. All designated Network users must sign an appropriate agreement for use memorializing this understanding. All such agreements will be maintained by Questar III as follows:
  1. Student agreements shall be maintained in student files and may also be obtained and maintained electronically.
  2. Employee agreements may be maintained in the individual employee's employment file and/or user agreements may be obtained and maintained electronically.
- E. Notwithstanding paragraph A. of this section, the Network administrator shall establish rules and agreements for employees who have a demonstrated need to access the Network from off-site to do so.

- F. The Network administrator may establish rules and agreements for short-term guest accounts for limited access to the Internet through the Network. Such guest users shall not be provided access or attempt to gain access by any means to the internal Network.
- G. Student user account information relating to the student use of the Network shall be deemed a student record and maintained in accordance with law, regulation and policy governing retention of and access to student records.
- H. No user shall access or utilize the Network for prohibited purposes as defined by this Policy, illegal purposes, or to harass another individual or entity. No user shall engage in use that poses security risks to Questar III. Any such unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Network by staff or guest user may result in revocation of access privileges and/or disciplinary action. Any such unauthorized or inappropriate use by a student user will be addressed pursuant to the Questar III Code of Conduct Policy.

#### IV. Waiver of Privacy

Computers and the computer network are property of Questar III and their use is subject to Questar III policies. All Network users waive any and all rights to and expectation of privacy while using the Network, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Questar III has the right to monitor any and all aspects of the computer network, including but not limited to, data saved on the computer network or computers owned by Questar III; monitoring of sites that computer network users visit on the Internet; monitoring of chat groups, news groups or blogs accessed through the computer network; reviewing material downloaded or uploaded by users of the computer network or onto any computer owned by Questar III; and reviewing e-mails sent or received by users of the computer network.
- B. By acceptance of the right to access the computer network, users of the computer network waive any and all privacy rights to or in anything created, stored, reviewed, sent or received on the Questar III computer network.
- C. Questar III is a public educational entity, therefore files, data or information maintained on the computer network may be accessible to the public or otherwise discoverable under law. Any materials on the computer network that would be considered "student records" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, however, shall be protected as provided under

such Act and in accordance with the Questar III Student Records Policy. Other Personal, Private and Sensitive Information (PPSI) shall be protected as provided by board policy 7-210 Data Classification and Management Policy.

#### V. Notice to Parents/Guardians

Questar III shall provide an annual written notification to parents/guardians of Questar III students of this Policy, the Questar III Internet Safety Policy, and pertinent rules and regulations concerning the use of the Network. Parents/guardians shall file a written acknowledgement of receipt of the notice on the student's user agreement form provided by Questar III. Such notice shall advise parents/guardians of:

- A. Expectations for appropriate online conduct by users;
- B. Reasonable steps taken by Questar III to ensure that students use the Network only for purposes that are consistent with the educational program;
- C. Technology to block or filter Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene or pornographic and that are harmful to minors
- D. Questar III's inability to fully prevent students' access to objectionable or inappropriate materials available through the Internet or posted on computers or sites maintained by others; and
- E. Questar III's right to monitor use of the Network by students and that students have no expectation of privacy while using the Network.

#### VI. Network Administrator

The district superintendent shall designate a Network Administrator to be responsible for maintaining the computer network, who shall participate in the planning process for the Network, oversee the Network's use and maintenance, and oversee the use and distribution of technology resources. Such Network Administrator shall directly or through his or her designee:

- A. Monitor and examine all computer network activities in order to ensure the legal, proper and effective operation and use of the system and that the computer network is not used for prohibited purposes;
- B. Arrange for employee training in the proper and effective use of the computer network;

- C. Arrange for training for Questar employees supervising student use of the computer network so that students who use or will use the computer network receive appropriate instruction in the proper, responsible and effective use of it;
- D. Utilize appropriate and current means and utilities to scan and clean all files for computer viruses prior to use on the computer network;
- E. Maintain adequate fault tolerance and back-up practices on designated files to ensure compliance with the Questar III Records Retention Policy.
- F. Maintain adequate fault tolerance and back-up practices for e-mails to ensure compliance with any required litigation holds on such records;
- G. Maintain a system to acquire, install and record software licenses;
- H. Maintain a system to establish email accounts for new Questar III employees, to terminate email accounts for employees who leave Questar III service, and maintain a log of such opened and closed email accounts;
- I. Designate at least two persons who have access to all email accounts at the direction of the district superintendent or his or her designee;
- J. Provide for firewalls and screening mechanisms to safeguard the integrity of the Network and protect records;
- K. Incorporate appropriate filtering mechanisms for staff access and student access, as appropriate and as directed by this Policy; and
- L. Identify and advise on appropriate uploading or downloading of software or applications.

#### VII. Information Security Officer

The district superintendent shall designate an Information Security Officer (ISO) to be responsible for reviewing the overall information security profile of the organization and promoting good data stewardship. Such Information Security Officer shall directly or through his or her designee:

- A. Coordinate the development and implementation of information security policies and practices;
- B. Classify and inventory organizational data and assess corresponding level of risk associated with each classification;

- C. Arrange for employee training in the proper and effective use of safe computing practices;
- D. Arrange for training for Questar employees supervising student use of the computer network so that students who use or will use the computer network receive appropriate instruction in safe computing practices; and
- E. Partner with the Network Administrator to architect, deliver and maintain a reliable and stable technology infrastructure.

#### VIII. Network Security

Any Network user who identifies or suspects security issues relating to the Network shall immediately notify the Information Security Officer or his/her designee. In order to avoid inadvertent security risk, such user shall refrain from providing a demonstration of such issue to any other person unless or until the Information Security Officer or designee has fully reviewed the matter. The Information Security Officer shall address and report suspected instances of security breaches in accordance with board policy 7-211, Information Security Breach and Notification Policy.

#### IX. Copyrighted Materials and Software Installation

- A. Copyrighted software or other materials shall not be placed on any Questar III computer or onto the Network, including but not limited to student developed websites, without appropriate legal authorization. Use of the Network shall be in accordance with the Questar III Compliance with Copyright Law Policy.
- B. Only persons accorded administrative rights shall be allowed to install any software to Questar III computers, including copyrighted software and public domain software.

#### X. Websites Associated with Questar III

- A. Social media will be used by Questar III only in accordance with board policy 7-213, Social Media Policy.
- B. Any use of the Questar III logo, or any other element of it, must be approved in advance by the Questar III Communications Department.



## XI. Certain Classrooms

Questar III students and staff located in classrooms which are provided access to a host school district's computer network or to a host entity's computer network shall access and utilize such network in accordance with such host's applicable policies and regulations.

## XII. Limitations on Liability

Questar III makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or services provided through the computer network will be error-free or without defect. Questar III makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, relating to the access to the computer network being provided to students, staff or guest users. Questar III will not be responsible for any damages students, staff, or guest users of the computer network may suffer, direct or indirect, including but not limited to financial loss, data loss, or interruptions of service.

Questar III is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information created, stored, reviewed, sent or received on the computer network. Parents and guardians assume full risk for their child's use of the computer network. Questar does not and will not assume any responsibility for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from the use of the computer network by any user.

ADOPTED: July 10, 2008  
Revised: May 10, 2012  
Revised:

### References

47 USC section 254  
20 USC section 6777  
47 C.F.R. 54.520  
State Technology Law, section 208  
Questar III Internet Safety Policy 7-209  
Data Classification and Management Policy 7-210  
Information Security, Breach, and Notification Policy 7-211  
Social Media Policy 7-213  
Questar III Records Policy 2-102  
Code of Conduct Policy 7-102  
Student Records Policy 3-106  
Compliance with Copyright Law Policy 2-106