

*The*  
POST OAK  
SCHOOL



Computer & Internet  
Responsible Use Policy  
2018–2019

Dear Parents,

In this booklet, you will find the Responsible Use Policy. All members of the school community are expected to understand and agree to the policy and turn in a signature page in order to use the school's computers. Given that the policy is written for a wide audience, we are providing some talking points below which we hope will help facilitate the conversation you will have with your child(ren) about the content of the RUP. We invite you to make use of this RUP as an opportunity to participate in this important aspect of your child's education.

### *Lower Elementary Students*

- ♦ Respect the privilege of using a computer at school by treating the machine carefully.
- ♦ The school computers are only to be used for school work.
- ♦ Respect the writing and pictures of others. Do not copy them to be used as your own.
- ♦ Tell an adult immediately if you see something on the computer that is inappropriate or wrong.
- ♦ Any items from the points below that you wish to communicate using age-appropriate language.

### *Upper Elementary Students*

- ♦ All of the items from the Lower Elementary list using age-appropriate language.
- ♦ Each student may only use his/her network account.
- ♦ Programs/software of any kind may not be downloaded.
- ♦ Refrain from accessing social networking sites such as Facebook while at school.
- ♦ Some aspects of computer use cross the boundary between home and school. When online behaviors impact the work of someone at school, it becomes school business.
- ♦ Always communicate politely when sending electronic messages. Understand the meaning of cyberbullying. It is a serious offense.
- ♦ Points from the Middle School list that you feel are appropriate to discuss.

### *Middle School Students*

- ♦ Ask your Middle School student to read the policy independently, letting them know in advance that you will discuss key points. As you discuss the document, listen for indications that your student understands all of the points from the above lists. Draw attention to points as needed.
- ♦ Most Middle School students are sophisticated users of technology. At the same time, they can lack the knowledge and judgment to make the best decisions in a fast paced, real-time virtual environment. Whether at school or at home, the implications of certain practices can be serious. Your student should understand these additional points:
  - What you put into cyberspace, you can't take back. Remember that you are communicating with a person, not a computer.
  - Do not transmit personal (identifying) information electronically—for yourself or others. This includes images.
  - Again, school computers are to be used for school work. If you are not sure if a particular source is appropriate, ask a teacher before accessing the source.

The RUP is the starting point, not the end of the conversation about issues related to computer use. Upon entering Lower Elementary, students receive orientations and lessons on using the computers at school. These lessons continue throughout their years at The Post Oak School. We aim to prepare students to be safe, responsible, thoughtful users of technology regardless of the forms it takes throughout their lives.

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# Computer & Internet Responsible Use Policy

## INTRODUCTION

The Post Oak School uses computers to teach the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that students will need as successful and responsible members of the community, and as life-long explorers. The school expects those who use the computers to do so in a way that is consistent with The Post Oak School's educational mission and this policy.

In today's world, The Post Oak School's community spans beyond our campus. All members of the Post Oak community (including guests) are expected to abide by the terms of this document any time they are using Post Oak's resources, acting as a representative of the school, or otherwise communicating the school name or image.

Since electronic media change constantly and rapidly, as does the "netiquette" among users, this policy cannot lay down rules to cover every possible situation. Instead, this policy expresses the school's philosophy and sets forth general guidelines to be applied to all users, whether they are students, faculty/staff members, volunteers, or other guests.

## WE FOLLOW CLEAR PRINCIPLES

In both the real world and the virtual one, on campus and off, common principles apply. As a Montessori school, we advocate and require concern and respect for both persons and materials. Conscientious sharing of limited resources, offering each other space and time for uninterrupted and unmolested work, attention to grace and courtesy both to peers and neighbors and to those in the wider world, and a careful balancing of society's needs and rules with our personal freedoms and responsibilities are also paramount. Whether on the computer or in person, our expectations are the same.

Users need to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and may not abuse their privileges.

## OUR COMPUTERS ARE INTENDED TO SERVE EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

**Connect computers, laptops, or other devices** to the networks that have been issued by the school or are part of the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. Other devices will need specific permission from the technology department.

**The law forbids illegally reproducing copyrighted material.** Comply with all software licenses and copyrights. Do not download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto Post Oak School computers, nor copy any

software from these computers, nor agree to any end-user license agreement, without the express permission of the technology director. The Post Oak School specifically forbids the use of any peer-to-peer file-sharing software whose primary or most likely purpose is copyright violation.

**Unacceptable uses of the network include**, but are not limited to: tampering with the school's wiring, software, or hardware; trying to gain unauthorized access to the school's system by hacking, using another user's login information, or accessing the files of another user without that user's consent; using the network for commercial or political purposes; or damaging the network by purposely activating a virus, worm, or Trojan horse program.

**Content created using the school's technology resources** and/or stored on the school's network is the property of the school and this content can continue to be used by The Post Oak School for educational purposes. The creator of the content may keep a copy of the document created.

**Users may save and store data** generated for school-related purposes using their designated folder on the network drives and/or Google Drive. Users are expected to remain within allocated disk space and to delete email attachments or other material which takes up excessive storage space.

**Users may NOT access their personal Internet-based email accounts**, such as Yahoo!, Gmail, Hotmail, AOL, etc., at school for any reason, unless granted specific permission from the technology director.

## USERS HAVE NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY ON THE COMPUTER

The Post Oak School retains the right to monitor, view, or access at any time the data stored in any given device, (laptop, tablet, phone, etc.), including but not limited to: Internet activities, email activities and accounts, network activities and accounts, and all data and/or software stored on desktops, laptops, and storage media. The Post Oak School does not expect to regularly monitor or inspect users' files and data, but retains the right to do so at its sole discretion.

## USING THE INTERNET REQUIRES CAUTION

**Do not transmit personal information** (home address, telephone number, your age or credit card numbers) through email or non-secure websites.

**Any email should be written as if it were a public document** that might be read by a third party: embarrassing or private emails can be forwarded or made public to others beyond the user's control. Users should not put anything in an email that they would be ashamed of seeing in *The Houston Chronicle* the next day. Nothing should ever be included in an email that might subject the sender or the School to embarrassment or legal action.

**Report the transmission of inappropriate content immediately to the division director or head of school:**

Individuals have access to a rapidly increasing number of easy-to-use electronic communication tools. This poses opportunities and challenges for both families and schools. Misuse of these tools, regardless of where it occurs, can have serious effects on individuals as well as the school community, and will be treated as a significant offense. Beginning in Upper Elementary and extending through High School, students receive lessons on appropriate ways to represent themselves using electronic media. As part of these lessons, we discuss the implications of sending hurtful, vulgar or explicit messages, photos or video content. Our advice for any member of the school community receiving such content: do not erase any messages; they may be needed to take action against the offender. Cyberbullying (electronically transmitted threats and insults intended to embarrass, harass, or intimidate), and the electronic transmission of inappropriate content by a member of the Post Oak community will result in disciplinary action.

**Prohibited software and sites:** the use of Internet chat or instant messaging software, social networking sites, online games, proxies/VPNs to bypass filter, sites that promote hate or violence or any other questionable material is prohibited on all school computers, without exception.

**All Internet access at the school is filtered** by a commercially produced product that attempts to block objectionable sites, but no filter is perfect. Internet activities are logged.

The school has a limited amount of bandwidth for the transfer of information to and from the Internet. Unless specifically used for a classroom project, access to streaming media (music, video, radio stations) is not permitted.

The Post Oak School makes no guarantee that the technology services provided will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage suffered including, but not limited to, loss of data or disruption of service.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media are powerful tools and have the potential to reach audiences far beyond The Post Oak community. This translates

into a greater level of responsibility and accountability for everyone.

Interacting online with other community members is no different than interacting with these individuals or groups face to face, we are required to maintain dignity and respect as outlined in the Student Conduct section of this handbook.

Recognize that:

- Social networking sites are increasingly interconnected in ways that may be largely outside the direct control of the users on any given site and social media activities may be publicly visible.
- Serving as a role model is a critical aspect as a member of The Post Oak community.
- Accordingly, you must exercise appropriate discretion when using social media when those communications can impact The Post Oak community.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you would not want friends, parents, teachers, or future employers to see.
- Faculty and staff are prohibited from "friending" current students (of any age), former students under the age of 18, and parents of current or prospective students, due to the inherent conflicts of interest that this may raise.

Community members are discouraged from publishing on public media (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) photos or videos of other students or community members without first obtaining the written permission of all those involved.

## LEGAL AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IS EXPECTED

**Respect all copyrights:** do not steal music, videos, software, or ideas. When doing research on the Internet, you are committing the crime of plagiarism if you copy material directly rather than putting it into your own words. The use of term-paper vending-machine sites is specifically prohibited.

**Maintain a high standard of civility:** no material containing offensive, profane, rude, inflammatory, threatening, violent, sexually explicit, harassing, abusive, or impolite language or images is to be created, viewed, or accessed. In the event that any such material is encountered accidentally, log off

immediately and report the event to the classroom teacher and technology director.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Middle School and High School students please reference the Museum District Campus section of the Family Handbook for further information on use of personal electronics and computers in your classrooms.

## VIOLATIONS WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Computer use is a privilege, not a right, and may be restricted or revoked at any time if usage is not consistent with the educational goals of the school.

Ask if you do not understand any of the cautions or prohibitions in this policy.

Consequences for any violations of this policy include but are not limited to: loss of network access privileges (including Internet access); loss of computer access privileges; and disciplinary action for students, as outlined for major misbehavior in the "Student Conduct" section of the Family Handbook.

For helpful information on these issues and more, please visit [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org) or [commonsensemedia.org](http://commonsensemedia.org).

## POLICY AGREEMENT

Both a parent and the student are expected to read and sign the Responsible Use Policy Agreement (RUP) to indicate that they know of and consent to follow this policy. Permission to use the school's computers will be granted upon the return of the signed RUP to the Technology Office.

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# Responsible Use Policy Agreement 2018–2019

Both a parent and the student are expected to read and sign this Responsible Use Policy Agreement to indicate that they know of and consent to follow this policy. Permission to use the school's computers will be granted upon the return of this signed Responsible Use Policy Agreement to the technology director.

## The Post Oak School Parent Agreement

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As a parent of a computer user(s) of The Post Oak School, I understand I will be legally responsible for my child's actions. I have discussed the rules with my child(ren). If necessary, I have read through and paraphrased the policies in terms appropriate for their understanding. I understand that this Agreement will be kept on file at the school.

OR

As a computer user (volunteer or guest) of The Post Oak School, I have read and understood this policy, and I understand that this Agreement will be kept on file at the school.

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Post Oak School Computer User (Student) Agreement

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As a computer user at The Post Oak School, I have discussed the rules with my parent(s), have asked any questions I had, and understand the rules.

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

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BISSONNET CAMPUS: 4600 Bissonnet Street, Bellaire, Texas 77401  
Tel. 713-661-6688 • Fax 713-661-4959

MUSEUM DISTRICT CAMPUS: 1010 Autrey Street, Houston, Texas 77006  
Tel. 832-538-1988 • Fax 832-538-1926

[www.postoakschool.org](http://www.postoakschool.org)