

Smyrna School District on the



Information Superhighway

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Smyrna School District on the Information Highway

Introduction 1

The Internet provides access to a vast array of resources. This handbook will help you to learn your role in the Smyrna School District's trip on the Information Highway. Everyone has an important role to play.

To Students 2

Students are the drivers on the Information Highway, and like all good drivers, they need to be aware of the rules and know how to drive safely.

To Parents 3

On the real highway parents have the responsibility to prepare young drivers before they hand over the key. Parents need to play a key role in helping their students become responsible users of computing and Internet technology.

To Teachers 3

On the Information Highway, teachers serve as the tour guides planning the trips and promoting safety.

Introduction

Everywhere we turn these days we hear about the Information Superhighway. Billboards and TV ads direct us



to web sites. Newsmagazines and talk shows discuss the impact of e-mail and instantaneous communication.

Not since the development of the printing press has the way we distribute information changed so dramatically. Not since the development of radio and television has the way we communicate altered so quickly.

In the Smyrna Schools community, some of us are poised on the on ramp, others are merging carefully and some are even driving in the passing lane. For us, technology is not an isolated part of curriculum and communication, but an integral part of how we deliver education and of how we communicate with each other -- students, parents and faculty.

This newfound worldwide access to information and individuals leads to unlimited opportunities. But these new opportunities require all of us to accept new responsibilities for dealing with resource, privacy and security issues. We all need to understand the possibilities, the limits and the rules of the road. You will explore the possibilities and limits as you use the Internet but the purpose of this handbook is to outline

the responsibilities of students, parents and faculty in using the new technology.

To Students:

Welcome to the Information Highway! Our aim is to help you navigate safely and avoid the potholes!

The first and most important thing for you to remember is that all of the rules of your classroom and your school also apply to your behavior when you use technology. Many of those are rules of common sense, good judgement and being respectful of others. On the Information Highway we know these rules as netiquette. So remember to be polite and thoughtful -- remember that there are real people at the other end of the computer network.

Another thing to be aware of is that when you use computers, you are sharing equipment with lots of people. Sometimes you may not even be aware of how you can damage that equipment or use up more than your share of the resources. Your teachers will help you avoid introducing viruses to the computers and will inform you about what your share of the resources is in things like disk space, computer time and paper use. Here too, you should think before you act.

As you travel along any highway, you will experience difficult situations; the Internet is no different. There are some simple rules to help you remain safe.



First, make sure never to give out personal information like your last name, your age or your phone number. Second, don't arrange to meet with someone you have met online without discussing it with your parents. Third, if you come across people or information on the computers that make you feel uncomfortable, tell your teacher immediately.

Finally, remember that this is new to almost everyone. In fact, five years ago much of this didn't exist and in five years most of it will be entirely different. Just as you rely on your parents and teachers to help you over rough spots in other areas, you can count on them to help you navigate the Information Superhighway.

To Parents:

When your youngster becomes a teenager, you will be there ready to help him or her prepare to become a new driver. You will talk with him about the rules of the road. You will let her know about your own expectations when they are using your car. Together with the school you will provide instruction on the care, maintenance and functioning of the car. And maybe you will get the child his own car!



You have the same role to play as your child ventures out on the Information Superhighway. We know it may be a little scarier. You have been a driver for a long time, but you may never have sent an e-mail message or surfed the World Wide

Web. This guide has been prepared to support you as you help your child get started or continue on the journey.

If your child is in high school or middle school, you will find them using computing and Internet tools throughout their schoolwork. Both of you should read this booklet and the rules in the Board Policy. Just like any other school rules, students will be held accountable for following the rules and you will want to be aware of the rules so you can guide them. Just like all the other parts of the school experience, you should discuss your son or daughter's computing and Internet use with him or her regularly.

Younger students will not be able to read this handbook or rules themselves, but they also need to be aware of their responsibilities. At the start, you will need to sit your child down and discuss this new part of their school experience. You will be another guide to help your youngster understand how he or she will follow the rules. Just as you do in other areas of their school experience, you will want to talk to your student regularly about how he or she is using the tools. Computers and the Internet are changing very rapidly and you and they will follow an exciting time as you use these tools throughout the school career. You will be amazed at how something that seems so new and different to adults is just another part of the school experience to today's young students.

Your child's teacher will be happy to describe how she is using technology to enhance instruction in the classroom. The principal could also fill you in on the school's overall technology plan. The board policy is included with this handbook for you to learn more about the specific rules.

Remember all of this is very new and very changeable. Through this partnership -- students, parents and teachers -- have an exciting opportunity to make these tools an essential part of the school experience and better prepare our students for rewarding trips on the Information Superhighway.

To Teachers:

On the Information Superhighway, teachers serve as the tour guides and driving instructors. In other words, your role in this is the same as it is for all other parts of the school experience.

To enhance the curriculum resources, teachers will be selecting and previewing materials for whatever the current curriculum goals are just as you have always looked for videotapes and library books. There are more resources available than ever before and teachers will simply apply the same standards that they have used in other



media to broaden students' experiences.

To prepare students for searching for and selecting their own materials, you will be helping students develop the skills to read critically and evaluate the providers of information, just as they do for news articles or TV shows.

To help students take advantage of the generous help of experts, mentors and colleagues around the world, you will be helping students use netiquette in all their computer dealings.

This is an exciting time of change for everyone and teachers are in a unique position patrolling the Information Superhighway to make the experience safer and more enjoyable for students.

Onto the Highway!

Curriculum and schoolwork are changing with the ever-expanding access to resources. Students can seek answers from experts around the world and review information from thousands of journals and newspapers. This is an exciting time when the horizons of information and global interaction seem almost limitless. And this partnership of students, parents and teachers will help all of us to use the new resources to meet the challenges of the 21st century.