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# Esperanza Cyber Charter School

## Technology Resource Student/Parent Handbook

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## Overview

The use of technological and electronic resources is central to the delivery of Esperanza Cyber Charter School's (ECCS) educational program and there is a clear expectation that all equipment and resources shall be used exclusively for acceptable, educational use. It is the policy of ECCS to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all electronic resource activities. With this privilege and extraordinary opportunity to explore resources are linked responsibilities for both the parent/guardian and for the student.

When signing the Student/Parent Laptop Agreement, all parties are acknowledging that they understand and accept the information contained in this document.

ECCS students and families must understand that:

1. All students are allowed access to electronic resources unless the school is notified in writing by the parent/guardian.
2. All users of the ECCS network and equipment must comply at all times with the complete policies as listed in Student/Parent Handbook, Summary of Acceptable Use Policy, and Summary of Internet Safety Policy.
3. Laptops are on loan to students and remain the property of ECCS.
4. All users are accountable to all school, district, local, state, and federal laws.
5. All use of the laptop and network must support education.
6. Students and families must follow all guidelines set forth in this document and by ECCS staff.
7. All rules and guidelines are in effect before, during, and after school hours, for all ECCS computers independent of location.
8. All files stored on ECCS equipment are property of the district and may be subject to review and monitoring.
9. The term "equipment" or "technology" refers to laptops, batteries, power cord/chargers, and mice. Each piece of equipment is issued as an educational resource. The conditions surrounding this equipment can be equated to those of a textbook or a school issued calculator.
10. Students are expected to keep the laptops in good condition. Failure to do so may result in charges for repair or replacement.
11. The price that the district paid for the laptop includes: laptop, battery, charger and 1-year hardware warranty.
12. The laptop warranty (provided by the school) may cover hardware malfunction, not damage to the keyboard or display.
13. Students are expected to report any damage to their computer to the Technology Help Desk as soon as it happens (i.e. no more than 24 hours later).

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14. Students who identify or know about a security problem are expected to convey the details to the Technology Help Desk without discussing it with other students.
  15. Students are expected to notify a staff member immediately if they come across information, images, or messages that are inappropriate, dangerous, threatening, or make them feel uncomfortable.
  16. All users are expected to follow existing copyright laws and educational fair use policies.
  17. Students may only log in under their assigned username. Students may not share their password with other students.
  18. Students may not loan laptop components to other students for any reason. Students who do so are responsible for any loss of components.
  19. Any failure to comply with this handbook may result in disciplinary action. ECCS may confiscate a user's laptop without notice at any time given reasonable suspicion.

## Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Esperanza Cyber Charter School makes every effort to equip parents/guardians with the necessary tools and information to ensure safe use of the laptops in the home. There are several responsibilities assumed by the parent/guardian. These are outlined below.

### Sign the Student/Parent Laptop Agreement

In order for students to be issued an ECCS laptop, a student and their parent/guardian must sign the ECCS Summary of Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Summary of Internet Safety Policy (ISP), found at the end of this handbook.

### Accept Liability

The parent/guardian/student is responsible for the cost of repair or replacement at the date of loss if the property or the equipment is:

- Not returned.
- Damaged (either intentional or due to negligence).
- Lost because of negligence.
- Stolen, but not reported to school and/or police in a timely manner.

### Monitor Student Use

The parent/guardian must agree to monitor student use at home and anywhere the student is completing schoolwork. The best way to keep students safe and on-task is to have a parent/guardian always present and involved.

Cyber schooling requires a great deal of time on the computer surfing, researching, web conferencing, and other education related activities. In order for your child to succeed at home, these suggestions

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should be put into practice to help eliminate some of the distractions that come with the computer and Internet (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube).

**Suggestions:**

- Investigate and apply parental controls available through your Internet service provider and/or your wireless router.
- Develop a set of rules/expectations for laptop use at home. Some websites provide parent/child agreements for you to sign.
- Only allow laptop use in common rooms of the home (e.g. living room or kitchen) and not in bedrooms.
- Demonstrate a genuine interest in what your student is doing on the laptop. Ask questions and request that they show you his or her work often.

### Support Student Safety

For schools and parents/guardians alike, student safety is always a high priority. The precautions described in this section are intended to help students be safe on the path to and from public locations (outside of the residence) where the student may be carrying his/her laptop in order to complete schoolwork. Student safety always comes first.

**Please review the following safety tips with your student:**

- Walk to and from home in groups of two or more.
- Be aware of your surroundings including people, vehicles, and wheeled devices.
- Let someone know when you leave and when you arrive home.
- Follow the safest route to your destination. Use main streets; avoid dimly lit areas, alleys, and shortcuts.
- If someone follows you on foot, get away from him or her as quickly as possible.
- If someone follows you in a car, turn around and go in the other direction.
- Always tell a parent/guardian, school official, or trusted adult in the event of an altercation.
- Turn the embroidered side of the case toward your body.
- If someone demands your laptop, give it to the person.

## Laptop Rules and Guidelines

The rules and regulations are provided here so that students and parents/guardians are aware of the responsibilities students accept when they use an ECCS-owned computer. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of all technology resources. Violations of these rules and guidelines will result in disciplinary action. Students receive laptop-related training during the first weeks of school. Below, you will find a summary of the main points of each training topic.

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## Electronic Resource Policy and Acceptable Use Procedures

### **All use of technology must:**

- Support learning.
- Follow local, state, and federal laws.
- Be school appropriate.

### **Security Reminders:**

- Do not share logins or passwords.  
*Exception: students are asked to share passwords with parents or guardians*
- Do not develop programs to harass others, hack, bring in viruses, or change others' files.
- Follow Internet safety guidelines.

### **All files must be school appropriate.**

#### **Inappropriate materials include explicit or implicit references to:**

- Alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
- Gangs.
- Violence (against self or others).
- Obscene language or nudity.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Discriminatory or prejudicial behavior.
- Plagiarism/ Academic dishonesty.

### **Auxiliary storage:**

- All ECCS rules and guidelines apply to any external drives (i.e. thumb drive/USB drive) that may be plugged into a ECCS laptop.
- Students are encouraged to back up school work through Google Drive so that important work is not lost if the laptop is damaged.

## Laptop Care and Appropriate Use

### **Care of Laptop at Home:**

- Charge the laptop fully each night.
- Store the laptop on a desk or table - never on the floor!
- Protect the laptop from:
  - ❖ Extreme heat or cold
  - ❖ Food and drinks
  - ❖ Small children
  - ❖ Pets

### **Habits While Working:**

- Center the laptop on the desk.
- Make sure there is nothing on the keyboard and then close the lid of the laptop before standing up.
- Lock the computer before walking away from it.

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### **Traveling With the Laptop:**

- Completely shut down the laptop before traveling.
- Do not leave the laptop in a vehicle.
- Use your backpack or carry the case by the handle or shoulder strap.
- If ever in a situation when someone is threatening you for your laptop, give it to them and tell a staff member/adult as soon as possible.

### **Prohibited Actions:**

- Putting stickers or additional markings on the laptops, batteries, or power cord/chargers.
- Defacing ECCS issued equipment in any way. This includes but is not limited to marking, painting, drawing or damaging any surface of the laptops.
- If any such action occurs, the student will be billed the cost of repair or replacement.

### Troubleshooting and Swap

1. Student attempts to fix the problem.
  - Always try restarting the laptop as the first step in troubleshooting.
  - If an error message appears on the screen, write the message down or take a screenshot to send to the Technology Help Desk.
  - Students are reminded not to waste too much time trying to resolve the issue, as it will take time away from their course work. Always ask if you need help!
2. If unable to resolve the issue, students should immediately Google chat or email the Technology Help Desk or call the learning center.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved via email or phone, the student will be asked to return the laptop to the ECCS main office for repair. During repair, students will be given a laptop on loan to continue working until the issue is resolved. Students living more than 20 miles from the ECCS main office will be mailed a prepaid padded box to safely ship his/her laptop to the ECCS main office.
4. If the issue is deemed to be caused by negligence (if damaged), or as a result of improper use of the laptop, students will be held responsible and subject to disciplinary action and cost of repair or replacement.

### Webcams

Each student laptop is equipped with a webcam. This equipment offers students an extraordinary opportunity to experience a 21st Century tool and develop 21st Century communication skills.

Webcams are to be used for educational purposes only, under the direction of a teacher. Examples include:

- Recording videos or taking pictures to include in a project.
- Recording a student giving a speech and playing it back for rehearsal and improvement.
- Participating in a live, virtual class lesson with a teacher present.

Please note that installing unauthorized Internet calling/video-conferencing software is prohibited on ECCS laptops. Software for using the webcam is already installed on the ECCS laptop. Please ask immediately if you are unsure how to operate your webcam.

### Listening to Music

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Students are not permitted to install any P2P (Peer-to-Peer) sharing programs or torrent programs on their laptops (i.e. FrostWire, Bareshare). This is considered pirating (stealing) and is a Federal offense. Such programs open a door to viruses and other malware that can cause serious damage to a computer. If such programs are found, the student will be subject to disciplinary action and/or the cost of repair or replacement if the laptop is damaged.

**At home:**

Listening to music on your laptop (from a streaming website or CD) is allowed at home. However, students are not permitted to rip, or download music directly onto their laptops. ECCS is not responsible for any lost music downloaded onto the computer.

### Watching Movies/Videos

Videos are a major tool utilized by our curriculum to provide a more interactive and fun learning experience. Therefore, we encourage students to utilize the internet and its multitude of video resources to enhance their learning. Just as with listening to music, students are permitted to watch educationally relevant movies and video from streaming websites. However, they are not permitted to install any P2P sharing programs or torrents onto their computer. This is considered pirating (stealing) and is a Federal offense. Any student caught with these programs, or illegal downloads of movies will be subject to disciplinary action.

### Gaming

**Online gaming is only allowed if the following conditions are met:**

- The content of the game is school appropriate.
- You have permission from your parent/guardian.
- The game is in support of education.
- All schoolwork is complete.
- No download of any kind is needed.

You are not allowed to load personal software onto your computer.

### Desktop Backgrounds and Screensaver

Any images set as the desktop background must be in line with the Acceptable Use guidelines. Inappropriate media may not be used as a desktop background. Presence of guns, weapons, references to violence, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, or gang-related symbols will result in disciplinary action.

### Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

A student may not cheat or plagiarize material; it is considered a level two offense. The content area teacher will determine cheating and/or plagiarism and penalties will include automatic failure of the assignment and/or the course.

***As per the Code of Conduct:***

The following sets forth the corrective actions that may be taken in the event of level two offenses:

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1. The student may receive a suspension and/or a special contract between the school and student and student's parents.
  2. The student may be required to make restitution for the offense(s) committed.
  3. The student may be referred for mandatory counseling at the parent/guardian's expense.
  4. The student may be required to appear before the Board of Trustees.
  5. The student may be expelled for cause.

## Technology as in Relation to the Code of Conduct/ Disciplinary Action

All ECCS Code of Conduct rules and regulation will be held in relation to computer use. Any situations involving unacceptable and inappropriate use of any ECCS-issued device or network will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to a formal meeting between the student, parent/guardian, school administrator, and Technology Coordinator.

### Examples of Unacceptable Use

Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Using the network for illegal activities, including copyright, license or contract violations.
2. Unauthorized downloading or installation of any software including shareware and freeware.
3. Using the network for financial or commercial gain, advertising, or political lobbying.
4. Accessing or exploring online locations or materials that do not support the curriculum and/or are inappropriate for school assignments.
5. Vandalizing and/or tampering with equipment, programs, files, software, network performance or other components of the network; use or possession of hacking software is strictly prohibited.
6. Gaining unauthorized access anywhere on the network.
7. Revealing the home address or phone number of one's self or another person.
8. Invading the privacy of other individuals.
9. Using another user's account or password, or allowing another user to access your account or password.
10. Tampering with another individuals' laptop, or removing their equipment from their designated area.
11. Coaching, helping, observing or joining any unauthorized activity on the network.
12. Posting anonymous messages or unlawful information on the network.
13. Participating in cyber-bullying or using objectionable language in public or private messages, e.g., racist, terroristic, abusive, sexually explicit, threatening, stalking, demeaning or slanderous.
14. Falsifying permission, authorization or identification documents.
15. Obtaining copies of, or modifying files, data or passwords belonging to other users on the network.
16. Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or network.
17. Attempting to access or accessing sites blocked by the ECCS filtering system.



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18. Downloading music, games, images, videos, or other media.
  19. Sending or forwarding social or non-school related email.

## Laptop Security

Two primary forms of security are laptop security and Internet filtering. Each of the ECCS laptops has a security program installed on it. ECCS strives to strike a balance between usability of the equipment and appropriate security to prevent the units from being damaged.

### **Laptop Security:**

Security is in place on the laptop to prevent certain activities. These include downloading or installing software on the laptops, removing software, changing system settings, etc.

### **Internet Filtering at the Learning Center:**

ECCS maintains an on-site Internet filtering software package. This program automatically filters all student access to the Internet.

### **Internet Filtering at Home:**

If a parent/guardian feels their student is often off task and would like tighter internet restrictions on their child's unit they may email or call the Technology Coordinator to arrange said modification.

## Damaged Equipment

### **Unexpected issues:**

Occasionally, unexpected problems do occur with the laptops that are not the fault of the user (computer crashes, software errors, etc.). These issues will be remedied at no cost. The student should follow the Troubleshooting and Swap policy mentioned previously. However, if after examination it is determined that the computer crash was an effect of negligence or inappropriate use of the laptop, the student will be subject to disciplinary action and/or the cost of repair or replacement of the unit.

### **Loaner Laptops:**

Temporary replacements, known as “loaners”, are available to each student so that the repair process does not disrupt learning. Students are responsible for the care of the loaner while issued to them. The same rules and regulations apply to a temporary loaner computer. Students should backup their files through Google Drive so that they may continue working on a loaner computer.

### **Damage:**

After investigation by the Technology Coordinator and IT specialist, if the laptop is deemed to be intentionally or negligently damaged by the student, the student will be subject to discipline and the cost of repair or replacement.

## Lost or Stolen Equipment

### Lost Equipment

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**Reporting:**

If any equipment is lost, the student or parent must report the loss immediately to the Technology Coordinator.

**Financial Responsibility:**

The circumstances of each situation involving lost equipment will be investigated individually. Students/families may be billed for damaged or lost equipment.

## Stolen Equipment

**Reporting:**

If equipment is stolen, a police report must be filed and the student or parent/guardian must provide a copy of the report to the school in a timely manner.

If there is not clear evidence of theft, or the equipment has been lost due to student negligence, the student and parent will be responsible for the full cost of replacing the item(s).

Failure to report the theft to the proper staff and follow the proper filing procedure may result in a bill for full replacement cost to the student.

**Financial Responsibility:**

After investigation and review of proper documentation, if a laptop is deemed stolen, ECCS will cover its replacement. The student will be issued a replacement computer at no cost to him/her.

## Policy on the Computer Access

All Chrome-based devices are registered with the application known as GoGuardian. GoGuardian provides content filter, GER-tracking, and remote access services to all Chrome OS – based devices. The app allows the school to limit access to harmful content on the Internet and track sites that could pose a threat to student safety and security.

The school also reserves the ability to remotely track and access the school-issued device in the event that the device is lost or stolen. We understand the importance of privacy and the school shall never access the device unless it is deemed necessary in the retrieval of the school's property. In the event that the device is lost or not returned, the school will employ the use of the geo-tracking features offered by GoGuardian to locate the device. The school will then attempt to retrieve the device or report the device to the proper authorities as fraud.

In the event that the device is stolen from the student, the school will use the geo-tracking feature to identify the location of the device and provide the information to the proper authorities for retrieval and investigation. In this event, the school also reserves the right to access the webcam of the device to identify the individual using the device to provide the information and images to the authorities. This feature is only to be used in the event of a stolen device and will never be used while the device is in the possession of the student.

## Replacement Costs

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ECCS strives to repair and return damaged units as quickly as possible. We have taken it upon ourselves to repair two of the most common issues in-house. If a student damages an ECCS issued laptop's display (screen) or keyboard the repair will be done at the learning center. Ultimately, this reduces the cost of repairs to a machine that have been damaged in this manner.

If it is determined that the laptop will need more extensive repairs, other than the damage mentioned above, ECCS will send the damaged machine to an authorized repair specialist for repairs. These repairs will vary in cost, and must be paid for by the student and parent.

In the event that the unit is deemed beyond repair, the student and parent will be held responsible for the full cost of a replacement unit. **(Cost to be provided after investigation.)**

### Payment Timeline

Parents/guardians/students have 30 days to pay any bills. If bills are not cleared within 30 days, students/parents will be billed for the full cost of repairs, and the school will file a claim. The school may set up payment plans to clear bills, if needed.

## Important Contact Information

In the event that you may need assistance with your technology, please use the following contact information. It is our goal at ECCS to provide appropriate assistance in a timely fashion. In many cases your request will be answered within an hour; however, we do ask that you allow for a 24-hour response to your questions or concern.

### **Esperanza Cyber Charter School Learning Center**

4261 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19120  
215-967-9703

#### **Technology Help Desk**

[help@esperanzacybercs.net](mailto:help@esperanzacybercs.net)

215-913-0879

Managed by IT Specialist:

Melvin Nuñez

[mnunez@esperanzacybercs.net](mailto:mnunez@esperanzacybercs.net)

#### **Technology Coordinator**

Daniel Schroeder

[dschroeder@esperanzacybercs.net](mailto:dschroeder@esperanzacybercs.net)

267-908-2931