Acceptable Use of the Internet

Ascend Leadership Academy provides students with Internet access to support education and research. Access to the Internet is a privilege subject to restrictions set by the Board of Directors. Violation of any provisions in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) may result in disciplinary action and/or cancellation of student access to the Ascend Leadership Academy network. This policy applies to all Internet access on ALA property, including Internet access using mobile devices.

Access to Information

The Internet gives students access to sites all over the world. Ascend Leadership Academy cannot completely control the information available to students. However, Ascend Leadership Academy will monitor the online activities of students and use content filtering software to provide Internet monitoring and content filtering for all students, staff, and visitors on the ALA network. The filtering software is intended to allow valuable Internet content, while prohibiting access to obscene material, including pornographic and other content that is harmful to minors. Although it may be possible for a student to find inappropriate material, ALA feels the educational benefit provided by the Internet outweighs any possible disadvantages. We encourage parents to talk with their students about sites and material which the parents believe are inappropriate. ALA cannot accept responsibility for enforcing specific parental restrictions that go beyond those imposed by the school. Furthermore, students who bring their own devices to campus are encouraged to take reasonable precautions to ensure the security of those devices. This includes operating system updates and virus scanning.

Acceptable Uses

All Internet use by students at Ascend Leadership Academy must have an educational purpose and comply with student behavior guidelines. Acceptable uses for students include:
- Visiting websites or databases that pertain to classroom activities or lessons.
- Creating or maintaining school or individual web pages or conducting email communications, all under the direction of staff
- Using search engines to access information, websites, or pictures that pertain to classroom material or projects

Unacceptable Uses

The transmission of materials that violate state/federal law or ALA policy is strictly prohibited. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to:
- Taking any actions that may disrupt the ALA network; this includes knowingly introducing a virus and "hacking"
- Disclosing, using, or disseminating personal information about any minor on the Ascend Leadership Academy network
- Accessing threatening or obscene materials
- Using language that threatens another individual
- Violating copyright laws and/or clickable licensing agreements
- Accessing personal email accounts or other forms of direct electronic communication including chat rooms for non-educational purposes
- Using the name and password of another user

Additionally, students may not use personal cellular connections to access the internet while on ALA campus. All student access to the internet must be via ALA's network.

Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of ALA staff members who have direct contact with students to educate students on online safety and cyberbullying prevention. Education related to online safety and cyberbullying prevention may include in-class discusses and assignments, webinars, parent meetings, or online courses. ALA staff members are also responsible for supervising students during class time internet use.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of ALA students to abide by the school AUP and participate in online safety education offered by the school.

Safety and Ethical Use

Any internet user must take reasonable precautions to protect him or herself online. Students, staff, and visitors should use the guidelines listed in this section.

Email, forums, instant messaging, and other online messaging

Special care must be taken when sending mass emails. Email addresses themselves are private information, and improper mass emailing can result in inadvertent sharing of addresses. Improper mass emailing can also allow recipients to reply to the mass message and send their own messages to the entire group. This is preventable by using a blind carbon copy (Bcc) feature or a mass emailing service. It is the responsibility of all ALA staff and students to use Bcc or a mass emailing service and to protect private information and data when sending mass emails.

Unauthorized access / hacking and general unlawful activity

Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to ALA resources, or using ALA resources to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to outside systems is unethical, unlawful, and forbidden by the AUP. This includes bypassing the internet filter without permission or purposefully gaining access to material that is harmful to minors. Assuming the online identity of another individual for any purpose is unethical and forbidden. Use of ALA resources for any unlawful purpose, including, but not limited to, copyright infringement, is unethical and forbidden by the AUP.

Academic integrity

Students are expected to follow all Board and school handbook policies regarding academic integrity when using technology.

Harassment and Cyberbullying

Cyber bullying may involve any of these behaviors:

1. Accessing, producing, posting, sending, or displaying material that is offensive in nature on the internet
2. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others on the internet
3. Posting personal or private information about other individuals on the internet
4. Posting information on the internet that could disrupt the school environment, cause damage, or endanger students or staff.
5. Concealing one's identity in any way, including the use of anonymization tools or another individual's credentials/online identity, to participate in any of the behaviors listed above.

The Managing Director will determine whether or not specific incidents of cyberbullying have impacted the school's climate or the welfare of its students and appropriate consequences will be issued. Schools are not responsible for electronic communication that originates off-campus.

ALA Internet Use Agreement

I understand that access to the Internet through Ascend Leadership Academy (ALA) is a privilege that is to be used for educational and instructional purposes. I agree to abide by the ALA Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Usage (2.014). I understand that any violation of this policy is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit a violation of this policy, my access privileges will be revoked and school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. Since all files are on a public network and on equipment provided by the school, I understand that they are subject to examination and review at any time.

Student Signature _____   Date_____

Parent Signature _____   Date_____