

TSA Information Technology Mission Statement

The use of Information Technology is an essential component of the educational process at The Sharon Academy.

As such, the school will maintain standards for, and instructions in, computer literacy; technologies to support not detract from classroom instruction and the infrastructure to support appropriate access to the Internet for every student, teacher, and administrator; electronic storage of appropriate documents for every member of The Sharon Academy community; access to email for every member of the school community; a set of standards, developed by administrative representatives, for the appropriate use of computer technology at The Sharon Academy; security adequate to protect The Sharon Academy computer network and file systems from intrusion, viruses, spyware, and other forms of abuse.

Computer Usage Guidelines

In order to maintain and sustain this resource, the school requires that every member of the community assume responsibility for its appropriate use. This use shall reflect the same standards of behavior as those in effect for personal behavior at Sharon Academy, including the school's policies and expectations regarding academic honesty, harassment, bullying, respect for privacy and personal property.

It is expected that every member of the school community will have a school email account. Email is provided for the purpose of exchanging information consistent with the educational mission of Sharon Academy and facilitating communication between students, faculty, staff, and parents. Users must log in to The Sharon Academy network and email using their own user ID and password. **Seeking or gaining access to the accounts, email, and files of others is prohibited.** This rule protects the basic right of privacy of all users on the network. Taking advantage of someone who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is no different than entering an unlocked room and reading a personal letter or destroying personal property. Once accounts have been established, users must not share their network or email account passwords with anyone.

Non-academic use of school computers and other electronic devices is restricted. Playing games is completely prohibited during the school day. Use of social networking sites is prohibited between the hours of 8:15 am and 5:00 pm at the MS and 9:00am and 5:00 pm at the HS.

Internet chat sites, blogs, gaming, and social media are examples of non-academic use of a school computer. It is not a good idea - and essentially unsafe - to publicize personal data, including an address or phone number, on the internet. It should also be noted that internet sites aimed at social networking (i.e.: Snapchat, Instagram, Tik Tok) are accessible to and referenced by future employers, college admissions offices, and the Vermont State Police.

The school's computers and network are the property of The Sharon Academy and are subject to access and inspection by network administrators. Computers may not be used at the school to attempt

to view, display, print, store, or distribute material that is commonly offensive to others, including pornographic, obscene, racist, hateful, or violent material. The TSA Network alerts members of the Student Support Team (SST) when language involving bullying, self-harm, or other destructive behavior is detected. If a user genuinely needs to research one of the other topics they must obtain permission from the Head of School or Dean of Students.

Personal Computers & School-Issued Computers

Policy Expectations

The Sharon Academy (TSA) maintains an environment focused on academic engagement and distraction-free learning. Students are not permitted to have personal computers or personal laptops on their person during the school day.

Only school-issued Chromebooks may be used during the academic day under staff supervision, unless, in a rare instance, a personal computer request form is filled out and approved.

Restricted Hours & Dismissal Schedule

The policy is in effect from 7:30 am until the daily dismissal time. Personal computers, if brought to school, must remain locked in storage bins, and school Chromebook rules apply during the following windows:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 7:30 am to 3:15 pm
- Standard Wednesdays: 7:30 am to 1:00 pm
- Ski Wednesdays (January – February): 7:30 am to 12:30 pm

Personal Computer Storage and Rules

- No Daily Necessity: Students who do not plan to complete schoolwork after school dismissal should leave personal computers at home.
- Morning Check-In: Students bringing personal computers for after-school use must place them in a designated locked storage bin immediately upon arrival.
- Retrieval: Personal computers will remain locked until the designated dismissal time for that day (3:15 pm, 1:00 pm, or 12:30 pm during ski season).
- Security Disclaimer: If you have concerns about computer security, we recommend leaving your personal computer at home.

School-Issued Chromebook Regulations

- Cart Distribution: School-issued Chromebooks are housed in 5 computer carts stationed throughout the school building.
- Instructional Use: Students may only use a school Chromebook during class time with express permission from their teacher.
- Immediate Return: Chromebooks must be returned directly to their designated cart as soon as the assigned academic task is completed.
- Phoenix Block Rules: During Phoenix Blocks (office hours/work time), students may use Chromebooks only in a designated classroom or workspace that contains a computer cart and has active faculty/staff supervision.
- Transport Restrictions: Students are strictly prohibited from carrying Chromebooks out of designated workspaces or keeping them on their person unless given prior permission by their teacher. Students are not permitted to bring computers to their core classes.

Consequences for Policy Violations

If a student is found to have a personal computer on their person during the school day, or is found carrying a school-issued Chromebook outside of a designated supervised zone during Phoenix Block, the disciplinary actions will strictly mirror the TSA High School Phone Policy:

- First-time offense: Device* is confiscated for the day and can be picked up by the student at the end of the day.
- Second offense: Device* is confiscated, parents are notified by a call or email home, and the student must meet with either the school counselor or Dean of Students (DOS) to discuss strategies on how to mitigate potential device addiction.
- Third offense: Device* is confiscated, parents are notified by a call home, parents/guardians are required to pick up the device from the school, a meeting is held between parents and the Student Support Team (SST) to discuss how the problem is going to be addressed.
- Fourth offense: Device* is confiscated, parents/guardians are required to pick up the device from the school, the student is sent home for the school day, suspension may be enacted and the student and parents/guardians must sign a behavioral technology agreement that states that further violations of the policy may result in dismissal from TSA.

*If applicable to personal computers.

In the rare event personal computers are permitted, non-academic uses such as gaming, social networking, and YouTube are prohibited between 8:15 am and 5:00 pm. People using personal computers are responsible for updated virus protection on their machines. Users not abiding by these guidelines may be reprimanded regardless of the fact that the computer is not school property.

Transmission of any material, via email or over the internet, in violation of any United States or Vermont statute or regulation is strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to copyrighted or trade secret material, threatening or obscene material, and criminal activity.

The school will update virus protection software on school computers as updates become available. School machines are scanned weekly. Users are responsible for taking precautions to prevent viruses on their own equipment connected to the school network.

The Sharon Academy cannot be held responsible for any lost resources or damages incurred through the use of a Sharon Academy account. Users are responsible for making their own back-up copies of documents that are critical to them.

Printing should be limited to class work and be kept to a minimum. The school community is committed to reducing waste and recycling used paper. Users are encouraged to select blocks of text to print rather than complete documents, where possible.

Users must use personal headphones for any computer programs that generate sound.

Users of the school network agree not to violate or attempt to violate network security or intentionally interfere with network performance. ***Attempts to subvert network security, to impair the functionality of the network, to bypass restrictions set by administrators, to capture passwords or network traffic data, and to download or to possess software that attempts to do these actions are serious offenses, which could lead to disciplinary action from the school.***

Assisting others in violating these rules is likewise punishable. Users may not use the school computers or network to hack into another computer system.

These guidelines apply to all members of the school community using computers while on school property. Users who don't follow the guidelines in this document may be subjected to disciplinary action by the school.