

T H R E E R I V E R S C H A R T E R S C H O O L

2018 • 2019

# TECHNOLOGY LICENSE HANDBOOK



GRADES 6 • 7 • 8

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### *PART II: THE AGREEMENT*

# DEAR STUDENT

Congratulations! You are here because you are willing to demonstrate that you are mature and responsible enough to manage a cell phone or other personal technology device at home and at school. This means that the adults in your life are trusting you to follow through on the agreements that follow in these pages, as well as to make good decisions when gray areas arise.

This manual contains the information you will need to commit to memory in order to pass the licensing test. It includes an agreement to be signed by you and each of your guardians. Anyone responsible for you outside of school needs to be on board (in writing) with the promises you and they are making because they will need to follow through if the agreements are broken.

The goal of this process is to ensure that everyone in your social sphere is safe and happy. A phone, tablet, or computer—if not used properly—can be a weapon that puts you or others at risk. You are great already; this is about making sure you continue to make wise choices.

Sincerely,  
TRCS Licensing Committee

# **PART I: LICENSING CRITERIA**



# SECTION I: COOLNOTCOOL .ORG

Relationships can be complicated at any age, but this is particularly the case when dating is a new concept amongst you and your friends. Whether you are currently in or interested in a relationship, know someone who is, or you or a friend may be in a relationship someday in the future, knowing appropriate boundaries is essential.

This online quiz will give you immediate feedback on the scenarios they set forward. You and your guardians will need to take the whole quiz, and you will need to be prepared to review similar scenarios on your license test.

If reading about or discussing these situations makes you uncomfortable, it's important to note that these things are starting to happen around you already and will only become more common in the near future. If you aren't ready to openly discuss these things, you are not ready for text and messaging through a cell phone, either.

## KEY POINTS

1. Being interested in someone romantically is normal and acceptable.
2. Consent is always mandatory for any step forward in a relationship.
  - A. When someone says no, asking repeatedly to elicit a different response may get a different answer, but it doesn't mean they consent.
3. Everyone is entitled to privacy.
  - A. Even in a relationship, a person has the right to have personal information.
  - B. You should not have to tell your significant other where you are, who you are with, or what you are doing at all moments.
  - C. Sharing passwords for social media accounts, email, or other personal accounts is not an acceptable way to gain a partner or friend's trust.
    - i. Trust means not having to know everything about the other person.
4. Honesty is essential, and knowing when not to say anything is priceless.
  - A. If someone asks or pushes you to do something you aren't comfortable with, being honest about your feelings is the best way to resolve the situation.
5. Rumors, particularly about sensitive information, such as sexual interactions and preferences, are always harmful.
6. Threatening or giving ultimatums is always unhealthy. It is important to know the difference between making a threat and stating your boundaries, which mostly lies in the wording and emotion behind your statement.

# SECTION II: MUSIC & MEDIA

**Listening to music or using other media (such as games and videos) is always a popular reason for wanting to use a phone at school. You must adhere to the following rules:**

- You may use music/media at recess, before school, or after school.
- You must use your own set of headphones or earbuds (not sharing) on your own device—not a school computer or iPad. Splitters are not allowed.
- You must have specific permission from your instructor to use your device for music in any class.
- Playlists should be set up in advance and only a small amount of time should be devoted to switching songs/videos or selecting music/media. This is ultimately not something that can or should be designated as a particular number of minutes per class, so it is up to teacher discretion to say when enough is enough.
- Volume should be kept at a reasonable level so that a listener can still hear the teacher when they are asking for attention, as well as if an alarm is activated or the intercom is used.
- Sound should never be audible to neighboring peers.
- Earbuds and headphones must be out/off whenever instruction is being given. Screens on personal devices must be shut off or closed at these times.
- Your choice of music/media should be something you are willing to play in front of your teachers or parents without embarrassment, meaning the content and language shouldn't be objectionable to either party.
- Music/media is never shared with a student who does not have a cell phone license, just as with all other cell phone or personal technology uses.

# SECTION III: SOCIAL MEDIA

## FORBIDDEN APPS

Apps for messaging are allowed, but only those that maintain a record of messages. Deleting messages or using disappearing communication may seem like a means to maintain privacy but it prevents open communication and often leads to questionable or negative behaviors. Therefore, you may have these apps at home, but they may not be used at or in relation to school. Apps and social media are constantly changing. If an app adds this feature, it's no longer school appropriate.

## PERMITTED APPS

Other social media apps are allowed. All use of these websites or apps needs to comply with the other guidelines laid out in this manual. For example, interacting online with students who do not have a phone license should not take place during school. All use of social media should take place during recess or before or after school.

## CONTENT

All photos need to adhere to the photo regulations described in the photo section of this manual. Posts and messages cannot be peer- or school-negative, meaning that users should remain positive and appropriate in their content. Finally, make sure you remember that deleting a post doesn't eliminate it. Read the internet permanence section for more.

# SECTION IV: TEXTING, CALLS & OTHER COMMUNICATION

With a license, you can use your personal technology to send messages outside of school, as long as you follow the rules below and use your best judgment.

- Only send messages that are appropriate. This means you should be able to show your message to an adult at school or a parent or guardian without embarrassment. If that would cause a problem, don't send the message!
- Any time you need something from an adult outside of school, whether you are not feeling well or you forgot your lunch or something else, you must go through the office instead of communicating outside school on your own.  
Any evidence that a student has reached out for something in this way is grounds for loss of a tech license.
- Any other kinds of texts and other ways of communicating should only happen before school, after school, or at recess.

Use your best judgement in all situations. Any issues are ultimately up to adult discretion.

# SECTION V: PHOTOGRAPHY

All students at TRCS are minors, meaning they cannot give legal consent to have their photos published. Some students at school cannot be photographed for any purpose because their parents have said they are not comfortable with it happening. Some staff members are not comfortable with their photos being taken. For these reasons, it is critical that no one take pictures of people at school, with the limited exception of Yearbook Staff. Those who qualify for Yearbook will have a separate agreement with the criteria for photos for that purpose.

- If you wish to take a selfie, no one else can be present in the photo. Of course, this rule applies to all school grounds and during school hours at any location. At school events, it needs to be you and you alone--not even a random person in the background. This is the case on field trips, and traveling to and from ODS. Photography with regular cameras at Outdoor School is a separate topic to be covered prior to that event.

Photos of items at school may be allowed. For example, if you wish to take a photo of some notes on the board, an example assignment, or some other inanimate object, this is fine during recess and other non-instruction times. Teacher permission is required for any instances during class that you think might be an appropriate or important time to take a photo. Permission is always needed for photos of someone else's work, even those pieces hanging on the wall for display.



# SECTION VI: DISRUPTION

Texting and messaging outside of school is often related to friendships and events that take place in school. Additionally, conversations outside of school often bleed into school conversations and relationships.

If a time comes when an interaction related to technology becomes a distraction or an issue within school, whether it originated at school or not, it is grounds for phone licenses to be revoked from all students involved, regardless of the source of the issue.

The top priorities at school are to be safe, both emotionally and physically, and to learn. This rule exists so that the adults at home and at school are able to maintain the safety and education that goes on at TRCS.

If you ever feel unsafe in any way, or know of someone who does, please immediately share it with an adult. We are here to help!

# SECTION VII: SAFETY & REPORTING

Communication via text or messaging on apps is often more comfortable as a means for sharing feelings or issues. This is one way to gain familiarity with someone and build a relationship that may later lead to more open in-person communication.

There have been times in the past where students have used texts and social media as a means of asking for help, whether for themselves or a friend. This could be for mental health issues, physical or emotional safety because of abuse, or other circumstances.

As a student with a phone license, you are required to report these issues to a parent or staff member at school. Take a screenshot of anything concerning and show it to an adult. Those reaching out to you may say they want you to keep secrets for them. Don't make any promises you cannot keep to the people involved; it is fair to say you are concerned and are going to seek help. Keeping information like this to yourself is usually harmful to those involved. It is better to risk a friend being upset in the moment than to risk their safety.

## CYBERBULLYING

Bullying is increasingly frequent online. It can take place instantaneously and repeatedly, and it can be hard for adults to detect, even if they are closely monitoring their student or child's technology.

# BULLYING TACTICS

Just saying something that hurts someone's feelings isn't necessarily bullying. It is better to lean on the side of caution, however, when it comes to telling an adult and taking action. According to StopBullying.gov, the most common methods of cyberbullying include:

- **Posting comments or rumors about someone online that are mean, hurtful, or embarrassing.**
- **Threatening to hurt someone or telling them to kill themselves.**
- **Posting a mean or hurtful picture or video.**
- **Pretending to be someone else online in order to solicit or post personal or false information about someone else.**
- **Posting mean or hateful names, comments, or content about any race, religion, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics online.**
- **Creating a mean or hurtful webpage about someone.**

If someone's content or communication online is causing negative emotions, it is likely that intervention from an adult regarding the actions a person is taking will lead to more positive choices down the road. Make sure that you always make the choice that will leave you with the fewest regrets possible.



## **SECTION VIII: GOSSIP VS. COMMUNICATION**

The exchange of information is an essential part of being a human being. The distinction between healthy discussion of relationships and actions of others from unhealthy gossip can be nuanced, however.

There are many recent articles online stating that gossip can be 'healthy.' The premise is true, but the label is misleading. In order to earn and keep your phone license, you need to be able to discern "gossip" and "rumors" from healthy social knowledge and communication.

Your anterior temporal lobe, or ATL, is the part of your brain that processes this type of thinking. It is what helps you learn facts about a new friend's interests and pair that information with their face, for example. When social talk turns sour, however, is when it becomes "idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others" (dictionary.com)--the very definition of gossip. Sharing information about others for entertainment at someone's expense or at the risk of hurting someone is never okay. If you are unable to make this distinction, you aren't ready to operate a phone because you are bound to end up feeling and inflicting pain, even if inadvertently.

Mistakes can happen; it is critical that you come to an adult to resolve an issue that has gone too far. This can be the choice that allows you to move forward and keep not only your phone, but your friends.

# SECTION IX: ADULT CONCERN

By earning a license for phone use at school, you earn the right for adults to assume you are being responsible and acting with integrity. Even with the best of intentions, however, many people make mistakes or errors in judgment.

The adults in your life are responsible for your safety above all; therefore, a parent or staff member may ask at any time to review content or behavior on a student's phone. Failure or refusal to produce an honest view of recent activity on your phone may result in your license being revoked. This is ultimately up to adult discretion due to the fact that it is possible to erase most immediate evidence of negative technological behavior.

Simply put, if an adult asks to see your phone and they are left in doubt about your judgment or actions, you may lose your license even if they can't produce specific evidence of a violation of this agreement. There must be at least circumstantial evidence, however, in order to take this action. Classroom disruption with a phone present, even if not in use, is a likely cause of this kind of scenario.

# SECTION X: DIGITAL PERMANENCE

The internet is an amazing place. You can find anything in an instant, and you can share your own life with others from across the world. This can be unifying, but it is dangerous. Too many people have learned the hard way that nothing posted on the internet is every truly able to be removed.

Imagine if every mistake you ever made was listed out for everyone you will ever meet to see. Your future friends, your future bosses, your future romantic partners, your parents and grandparents, even your own kids...Anything you share with someone on an app, on social media, through text, or anywhere else that is transmitted electronically is always available to show up again later in your life. Even if you think you are just sending a message to your best friend privately, there are many ways that your private conversation may become shared.

No matter what you're putting out there--to one friend or to all of your followers--remember that you have no control over what happens to it from the moment you send or post. Be ready for the world to have that content forever.

# SECTION XI: TECH FREE MONDAYS

For the remainder of the school year, all school staff and students will be committed to using as little technology as possible on Mondays. This will have exceptions—the office must make phone calls, teachers must return emails and post homework after school, and we may need to conduct MAP or Smarter Balanced testing on a Monday.

All students with tech licenses agree to not use personal devices of any kind on Mondays. Any tech usage must follow the school guideline of necessary tech use only. This is up to staff discretion. If you have any questions or need clarification, it is always better to ask.

# **SECTION XII: LOSING YOUR LICENSE**

**If a student breaks the rules of the cell phone contract at any time, their license will be immediately revoked until a meeting with parents and school staff takes place.**

**Depending upon the severity of the issue, a student may be given another chance with their license or they may lose it on the first strike.**

**Losing a technology license might also mean loss of all technology use at school.**

**A lost license may not be regained until the following school year.**

**Students without licenses who bring devices to school may be required to check their items in and out at the beginning and end of each school day if issues arise around technology.**

# PART II: THE AGREEMENT



# INSTRUCTIONS

For both sections, students and guardians must read each agreement. At the end of the section, sign and print your name, then date your signature to demonstrate that you commit to upholding the licensure agreement as a whole document, including the final statement.

# AGREEMENTS

1. I will not create accounts or give out any private information – such as my full name, date of birth, address, phone number, or photos – without my family’s permission.
2. I will ask my family to help me with privacy settings if I want to set up devices, accounts, or profiles.
3. I will not send or receive inappropriate\* photos EVER. I understand that there could be serious legal consequences that could put my future and the future of others at risk.  
*\*something your parent, guardian, or teachers would not approve of you sharing.*
4. I will never search for anything that I would not be willing and comfortable showing my parents or teachers.
5. I understand that my behavior on my phone can impact my future reputation, even in ways that I am not able to predict or see.
6. If anyone makes me feel pressured or uncomfortable, or acts inappropriately or suspiciously toward me online, I’ll stop talking to that person and will tell an adult or family member I trust about it.
7. I will always tell an adult if I am or someone else is being harassed, acting unusual, or exhibiting concerning behavior or language. I promise to err on the side of caution when it comes to my well-being and the well-being of others.
8. I will make an effort to learn internet and phone etiquette. I understand this is an extension of normal manners. I will turn off or silence and put away my phone in public, especially in a restaurant, at the movies, or while speaking with or listening to another human being.

9. I will never use my phone, social media, or the internet in any way to bully or tease anyone. I will intervene and tell an adult when I witness anything that is bullying behavior, gossip, or rumors.

10. I will keep my passwords private and only share them with my parents and guardians at home.

11. I will tell an adult if anyone online or through text makes me feel uncomfortable, sad, or unsafe. I will recognize that my safety and the safety of others is more important than anything else.

12. I will not bully, humiliate, or upset anyone online or with my phone – whether through sharing photos, videos, or screenshots, spreading rumors or gossip, or setting up fake profiles – and I will stand up to those who do.

13. I know that the internet is public and will treat it with the appropriate level of discretion. I know that the photos and videos I post, and everything that I write about myself and others online, can be saved and shared without my knowing. Therefore, I will not post anything online that I wouldn't want my family, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to see. I will show the same respect to others.

14. I will not pretend that I created something that is not actually my original work. Whenever I use, reference, or share someone else's creative work online, I will give proper credit to the author or artist.

15. I know that not everything I read, hear or see online is true. I will act with integrity and caution when perpetuating anything I encounter in this way. I will consider the source, author and content and whether they are credible before sharing with others or allowing the content or creator to influence my thoughts or actions. As an author, I will also contribute information thoughtfully and honestly. I will not use any apps with disappearing messages at school.

16. I will help my family set media time and use limits that make sense, and then I will follow them. I will respect the limits laid out by the adults in my life with regard to technology. I will be open with my family about how I spend my time with media and show them that I use it responsibly.

17. I will be mindful of how much time I spend in front of screens, and I will continue to enjoy the other activities – and people – in my life.

18. My family will acknowledge that media is a big part of my life, even if they don't always understand why.

19. The adults in my life will talk with me about what worries them and why before saying, "No" or taking technology or other privileges away.

20. I will use my phone only at recess, before and after school, or when given approval by a teacher in class. I will only use approved applications when at school, at home, or anywhere else. I will never use my phone with anyone who does not hold a phone license when I am at school. I will get permission before taking any pictures of others' work or in class, and I will not take photos of anyone else.\* I will only listen to music when given permission.

*\*Unless I am a member of the yearbook staff and have been granted permission.*

21. I will always take no for an answer the first time.

22. I will not lie or deceive adults about where I am, where I have been, or what I am doing. I promise to answer questions openly, honestly and directly.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that I am a minor and that this phone is, therefore, the property of my parents. Having this technology is not a right, but a privilege that can be taken away. As such, I have read this document entirely and agree to all of the rules. I understand that if I ever have any questions, I should speak with an adult face-to-face. If any portion of this agreement is violated, I realize that I will lose my license and will not be eligible to retest until the following school year.

**Note: All guardians of the student must sign the agreement, or the agreement is void.**

Printed Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Licensure: \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement is valid for the 2018-2019 school year only. Students may renew their licenses for the following school year by retaking the test and signing a new agreement.