Mountain Brook Schools Data Governance Policy (C-9)

I. PURPOSE

A. It is the policy of Mountain Brook Schools that data or information in all its forms—written, electronic, or printed—is protected from accidental or intentional unauthorized modification, destruction or disclosure throughout its life cycle. This protection includes an appropriate level of security over the equipment, software, and practices used to process, store, and transmit data or information.

B. The data governance policies and procedures are documented and reviewed annually by the data governance committee.

C. Mountain Brook Schools conducts annual training on their data governance policy and documents that training.

D. The terms data and information are used separately, together, and interchangeably throughout the policy. The intent is the same.

II. SCOPE

The superintendent is authorized to establish, implement, and maintain data and information security measures. The policy, standards, processes, and procedures apply to all students and employees of the district, contractual third parties and agents of the district, and volunteers who have access to district data systems or data.

This policy applies to all forms of Mountain Brook Schools’ data and information, including but not limited to:

A. Speech, spoken face to face, or communicated by phone or any current and future technologies,

B. Hard copy data printed or written,

C. Communications sent by post/courier, fax, electronic mail, text, chat and or any form of social media, etc.,

D. Data stored and/or processed by servers, PC’s, laptops, tablets, mobile devices, etc., and

E. Data stored on any type of internal, external, or removable media or cloud based services.

III. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The district shall abide by any law, statutory, regulatory, or contractual obligations affecting its data systems. Mountain Brook Schools complies with all applicable regulatory acts including but not limited to the following:

A. Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
B. Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
C. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
D. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
E. Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)
F. Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

*See also Appendix A (Laws, Statutory, Regulatory, and Contractual Security Requirements.)*

**IV. RISK MANAGEMENT**

A. A thorough risk analysis of all Mountain Brook Schools’ data networks, systems, policies, and procedures shall be conducted on an annual basis or as requested by the Superintendent, ISO, or Technology Director. The risk assessment shall be used as a basis for a plan to mitigate identified threats and risk to an acceptable level.

B. The Superintendent or designee administers periodic risk assessments to identify, quantify, and prioritize risks. Based on the periodic assessment, measures are implemented that mitigate the threats by reducing the amount and scope of the vulnerabilities.

* See also Appendix B (Information Risk Management Practices)
* See also Appendix C (Definitions and Responsibilities)

**V. DATA CLASSIFICATION**

Classification is used to promote proper controls for safeguarding the confidentiality of data. Regardless of classification the integrity and accuracy of all classifications of data are protected. The classification assigned and the related controls applied are dependent on the sensitivity of the data. Data are classified according to the most sensitive detail they include. Data recorded in several formats (e.g., source document, electronic record, report) have the same classification regardless of format.

* See also Appendix D (Data Classification Levels)

**VI. SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION CONTROL**

Any computer, laptop, mobile device, printing and/or scanning device, network appliance/equipment, AV equipment, server, internal or external storage, communication device or any other current or future electronic or technological device may be referred to as systems. All involved systems and information are assets of Mountain Brook Schools shall be protected from misuse, unauthorized manipulation, and destruction. These protection measures may be physical and/or software based.

A. **Ownership of Software:** All computer software developed by Mountain Brook Schools employees or contract personnel on behalf of Mountain Brook Schools, licensed or purchased for Mountain Brook Schools use is the property of Mountain Brook Schools and shall not be copied for use at home or any other location, unless otherwise specified by the license agreement.

B. **Software Installation and Use:** All software packages that reside on technological systems within or used by Mountain Brook Schools shall comply with applicable licensing agreements and restrictions and shall comply with Mountain Brook Schools’ acquisition of software procedures.

*See also Appendix E (Acquisition of Software Procedures)*

C. **Virus, Malware, Spyware, Phishing and SPAM Protection:** Virus checking systems approved by the District Technology Department are deployed using a multi-layered approach (computers, servers, gateways, firewalls, filters, etc.) that ensures all electronic files are appropriately scanned for viruses,
malware, spyware, phishing and SPAM. Users shall not to turn off or disable Mountain Brook Schools’ protection systems or to install other systems.

*See also Appendix F (Virus, Malware, Spyware, Phishing and SPAM Protection)*

D. Access Controls: Physical and electronic access to information systems that contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Confidential information, Internal information and computing resources is controlled. To ensure appropriate levels of access by internal workers, a variety of security measures are instituted as recommended by the data governance committee and approved by Mountain Brook Schools. In particular, the data governance committee shall document roles and rights to the student information system and other like systems. Mechanisms to control access to PII, Confidential information, Internal information and computing resources include, but are not limited to, the following methods:

1. **Authorization:** Access shall be granted on a “need to know” basis and shall be authorized by the superintendent, principal, immediate supervisor, or Data Governance Committee with the assistance of the Technology Director and/or Information Security Officer (ISO.) Specifically, on a case-by-case basis, permissions may be added in to those already held by individual users in the student management system, again on a need-to-know basis and only in order to fulfill specific job responsibilities, with approval of the Data Governance Committee.

2. **Identification/Authentication:** Unique user identification (user ID) and authentication are required for all systems that maintain or access PII, Confidential information, and/or Internal Information. Users shall be held accountable for all actions performed on the system with their User ID. User accounts and passwords shall NOT be shared.

3. **Data Integrity:** Mountain Brook Schools provides safeguards so that PII, Confidential, and Internal Information is not altered or destroyed in an unauthorized manner. Core data are backed up to a private cloud for disaster recovery. In addition, listed below are methods that are used for data integrity in various circumstances:
   - transaction audit
   - disk redundancy (RAID)
   - ECC (Error Correcting Memory)
   - checksums (file integrity)
   - data encryption
   - data wipes

4. **Transmission Security:** Technical security mechanisms are in place to guard against unauthorized access to data that are transmitted over a communications network, including wireless networks. The following features are implemented:
   - integrity controls and
   - encryption, where deemed appropriate

*Note: Only MBS district-supported email accounts shall be used for communications to and from school employees, to and from parents or other community members, to and from other educational agencies, to and from vendors or other associations, and to and from students for school business.

*See also Resource 3: Excerpts from Email Guidelines*
5. **Remote Access:** Access into Mountain Brook Schools’ network from outside is allowed using the MBS Portal. All other network access options are strictly prohibited without explicit authorization from the Technology Director, ISO, or Data Governance Committee. Further, PII, Confidential Information and/or Internal Information that is stored or accessed remotely shall maintain the same level of protections as information stored and accessed within the Mountain Brook Schools’ network. PII shall only be stored in cloud storage if said storage has been approved by the Data Governance Committee or its designees.

6. **Physical and Electronic Access and Security:** Access to areas in which information processing is carried out shall be restricted to only appropriately authorized individuals. At a minimum, staff passwords shall be changed annually.

- No PII, Confidential and/or Internal Information shall be stored on a device itself such as a hard drive, mobile device of any kind, or external storage device that is not located within a secure area.
- No technological systems that may contain information as defined above shall be disposed of or moved without adhering to the appropriate Purchasing and Disposal of Electronic Equipment procedures.
- It is the responsibility of the user to not leave these devices logged in, unattended, and open to unauthorized use.

*See also Appendix G (Physical and Security Controls Procedures.)*
*See also Appendix H (Password Control Standards.)*
*See also Appendix I (Purchasing and Disposal Procedures.)*
*See also Appendix J (Data Access Roles and Permissions.)*
E. Data Transfer/Exchange/Printing:

1. Electronic Mass Data Transfers: Downloading, uploading or transferring PII, Confidential Information, and Internal Information between systems shall be strictly controlled. Requests for mass download of, or individual requests for, information for research or any other purposes that include PII shall be in accordance with this policy and be approved by the data governance committee. All other mass downloads of information shall be approved by the committee and/or ISO and include only the minimum amount of information necessary to fulfill the request. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) shall be in place when transferring PII to external entities such as software or application vendors, textbook companies, testing companies, or any other web based application, etc. unless the exception is approved by the data governance committee.

*See also Appendix K (Mountain Brook Schools Memorandum of Agreement.)*

2. Other Electronic Data Transfers and Printing: PII, Confidential Information, and Internal Information shall be stored in a manner inaccessible to unauthorized individuals. PII and Confidential Information shall not be downloaded, copied or printed indiscriminately or left unattended and open to compromise. PII that is downloaded for educational purposes where possible shall be de-identified before use.

F. Oral Communications: Mountain Brook Schools’ staff shall be aware of their surroundings when discussing PII and Confidential Information. This includes but is not limited to the use of cellular telephones in public areas. Mountain Brook Schools’ staff shall not discuss PII or Confidential Information in public areas if the information can be overheard. Caution shall be used when conducting conversations in: semi-private rooms, waiting rooms, corridors, elevators, stairwells, cafeterias, restaurants, or on public transportation.

G. Audit Controls: Hardware, software, services and/or procedural mechanisms that record and examine activity in information systems that contain or use PII are reviewed by the Data Governance Committee annually. Further, the committee also regularly reviews records of information system activity, such as audit logs, access reports, and security incident tracking reports. These reviews shall be documented and maintained for six (6) years.

H. Evaluation: Mountain Brook Schools requires that periodic technical and non-technical evaluations of access controls, storage, and other systems be performed in response to environmental or operational changes affecting the security of electronic PII to ensure its continued protection.

I. IT Disaster Recovery: Controls shall ensure that Mountain Brook Schools can recover from any damage to critical systems, data, or information within a reasonable period of time. Each school, department, or individual is required to report any instances immediately to the Superintendent, Risk Management Officer, Technology Director and/or ISO for response to a system emergency or other occurrence (for example, fire, vandalism, system failure and natural disaster) that damages data or systems. The IT Disaster Plan shall include the following:

1. A prioritized list of critical services, data, and contacts.
2. A process enabling Mountain Brook Schools to restore any loss of data in the event of fire, vandalism, natural disaster, or system failure.
3. A process enabling Mountain Brook Schools to continue to operate in the event of fire, vandalism, natural disaster, or system failure.
4. Procedures for periodic testing of written contingency plans to discover weaknesses and the subsequent process of revising the documentation, if necessary.
VII. COMPLIANCE

A. The Data Governance Policy applies to all users of Mountain Brook Schools’ information including: employees, staff, students, volunteers, and outside affiliates. Failure to comply with this policy by employees, staff, volunteers, and outside affiliates may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with applicable Mountain Brook Schools’ procedures, or, in the case of outside affiliates, termination of the affiliation. Failure to comply with this policy by students may constitute grounds for corrective action in accordance with Mountain Brook Schools’ policies. Further, penalties associated with state and federal laws may apply.

B. Possible disciplinary/corrective action may be instituted for, but is not limited to, the following:
1. Unauthorized disclosure of PII or Confidential Information.
2. Unauthorized disclosure of a log-in code (User ID and password).
3. An attempt to obtain a log-in code or password that belongs to another person.
4. An attempt to use another person's log-in code or password.
5. Unauthorized use of an authorized password to invade student or employee privacy by examining records or information for which there has been no request for review.
6. Installation or use of unlicensed software on Mountain Brook School technological systems.
7. The intentional unauthorized altering, destruction, or disposal of Mountain Brook Schools’ information, data and/or systems. This includes the unauthorized removal from MBS of technological systems such as but not limited to laptops, internal or external storage, computers, servers, backups or other media, copiers, etc. that contain PII or confidential information.
8. An attempt to gain access to log-in codes for purposes other than for support by authorized technology staff, including the completion of fraudulent documentation to gain access.