# Computer, Network, Internet and Web Page
## Acceptable Use Policy
## for the Students of the Springfield Public Schools

The Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources, which includes World Wide Web access and electronic mail capability, exists solely for educational purposes which are defined as classroom activities, research projects directly related to class assignments, and career and professional development of an educational nature.  As used in this document, the term "computer and information technology resources" refers to all computer and information technology systems and accessories. These include, but are not limited to, the local area networks, wide area network, the Internet connection and World Wide Web, electronic mail, computers, printers, servers, access to research databases and services, other communications equipment or peripherals, software programs and data.

The Internet is a world wide network of interconnected computers that allows users to share information with one another. The Internet also provides an opportunity for users to communicate with each other, no matter how far apart they are geographically. Because of its enormous size, the Internet provides an almost limitless amount of information that can be put to great educational purposes. However, with such great potential for education also comes the potential for posting or retrieval, intentionally or unintentionally, of inappropriate or harmful material. It is the purpose of these guidelines to assist all students and members of the Springfield Public Schools to use the SPS computer and information technology resources safely and appropriately.

The computer and information technology resources are not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services. The Springfield Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk that students will encounter objectionable material on the Internet. However, there is no absolute guarantee that this will not happen.

Members of the Springfield Public Schools community are responsible for good behavior on school computer and information technology resources just as they are in classrooms or school hallways. Communications on computer and information technology resources may reach larger audiences than face-to-face conversations or telephone discussions. General school rules for behavior and communication apply.

Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette which include, but are not limited to:
   a) Be polite. Use appropriate, non-abrasive language.
   b) Do not reveal personal information such as last names, addresses, phone numbers, photos, etc. that could identify the user or other students or staff.
   c) Do not use the network in such a way as to disrupt its use by others.
   d) Do not make defamatory remarks, sexual or racial slurs, or use obscene or profane language.
   e) Passwords should not be revealed or shared with anyone.

The Springfield Public Schools believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources, and the opportunity for collaboration available through the Internet exceed the potential disadvantages. Families should be aware that Springfield Public Schools intends to incorporate network use and Internet access in the schools according to grade level as follows:

A. <u>Grade Kindergarten through two:</u>  Students at these levels will not have individual computer network passwords or e-mail accounts (unless the Superintendent or his/her designee approves). During school time, teachers of students in grades K-2 will guide them toward appropriate materials. Web/Internet access at these grade levels will be limited to teacher–directed and teacher-demonstrated use. Students will not be conducting independent research on the Web/Internet, nor will they be sending or receiving electronic mail independently.

B. <u>Grades three through five:</u> Students in grades three through five may have individual passwords. Students at these grade levels will have the opportunity to conduct research via the Web/Internet in the classroom and during directly supervised instruction, participate in class electronic mail sent to subject experts.

C. <u>Grade six through twelve:</u> Students in grades six through twelve may be given individual access passwords and may have the opportunity to access the Web/Internet and may receive individual email accounts. Students will have the opportunity to access the Internet, participate in on-line course work, and conduct independent, self–directed research, both during classroom instruction and outside of classroom instruction.

For students to be permitted to gain independent access to the Internet they must agree to and abide by the rules set out below.  For students under 18, parent/guardian must provide written permission forms before students will be permitted to gain independent access to the web or individual e-mail accounts, if any.  If the Springfield Public Schools does not receive a signed user agreement and, if applicable, a signed parental permission form, students will not gain independent access to the web or individual e-mail accounts, but they may still have exposure to the Internet during classroom instruction or library research exercises.

The Springfield Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk that users will encounter objectionable material on the Internet.  However, there is no absolute guarantee that this will not happen.  The Springfield Public Schools intends to utilize any blocking or filtering safeguards required by The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding support for Internet access or internal connections from the "E-rate" program. With these measures, in addition to user education, implementation of this policy and grade –appropriate supervision, the Springfield Public Schools believes that the Internet can be used safely to enhance the delivery of educational services.

The following rules apply to the use of the Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources:

1. SPS computer and information technology resource access is a PRIVILEGE, not a right. The use of the SPS computer and information technology resources must be consistent with, and directly related to the educational objectives of the Springfield Public Schools. *A violation of the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or termination of access privileges, including but not limited to, Internet, computer network and/or e-mail privileges and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of the Springfield Public Schools, including its Code of Conduct, and/or prosecution under applicable state and federal laws. Users should also be aware that violation of these rules that constitutes a crime will be reported to the proper authorities and may also result in criminal prosecution.*

2. Violations of Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
   a. Placing unlawful and/or inappropriate information on any system belonging to the Springfield Public Schools.
   b. Using profane, vulgar, threatening, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, or otherwise objectionable or criminal language in a public or private message.
   c. Sending messages or posting information that would likely result in the loss of a recipient's work or system.
   d. Sending "chain letters" or "Non-SPS broadcast" messages to lists or individuals.
   e. Participating in other types of use which would cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
   f. Using the SPS computer and information technology resources in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening material, and spreading of computer viruses, trojans or spam.
   g. Accessing or transmitting materials that are obscene, sexually explicit, or accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet.
   h. Revealing one's own personal address or telephone number or other personal information
   i. Revealing ones' password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer and information technology resources.
   j. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment, including attempts to override or to encourage others to override any firewalls or filters established on the network
   k. Attempting to harm, modify, or destroy data of another user.
   l. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever which would in any way subject the user or the Springfield Public Schools to any civil or criminal action.
   m. Discussing highly sensitive or confidential school department information in email communication.

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n. Sending identifiable confidential student or employee data through email.
o. Using the Springfield Public Schools technology to buy, sell, or advertise anything not directly related to Springfield Public Schools work/activities.
p. Accessing discussion groups or "chat rooms" or engaging in any other form of online conversation or communication whose primary purpose is not educational or Springfield Public Schools related.
q. Using the Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources work for gambling.
r. Using the Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources for political campaigning purposes, including attempts to influence ballot questions or to promote or oppose a candidate for public office.
s. Failing to log off the computer network at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of system administrators.
t. Installing software or data on computer and information technology resources without the permission of the Technology Operations Director.

Note: The above rules apply to current and developing WEB 2.0, including but not limited to, social networking resources such as Blogging, Podcasting, etc. Students, who "publish" on the Internet for school related projects must inform, and involve a content sponsoring teacher.

3. The Springfield Public Schools assumes no responsibilities for:
   a. Any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges, and/or equipment or line costs.
   b. Any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services.
   c. Any cost liability or damages caused by a user's violation of these guidelines.
   d. Any information or materials that are transferred through the network.
   e. Any other inappropriate use of electronic resources of the Springfield Public Schools.

4. The Springfield Public Schools makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Springfield Public Schools shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the network.

5. All documents and resources created on this system are the Intellectual Property of the Springfield Public Schools.

6. **No Expectation of Privacy**. All messages and information created, sent, or retrieved on an SPS computer or network are the property of the Springfield Public Schools. Electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students and staff, including accessing web pages, should not be considered confidential. Copies of all information created sent, or retrieved are stored on the computer network's back-up and archive files. While the Springfield Public

Schools does not plan to review cached files or back-up files on a regular basis, it reserves the right to access then as it deems necessary and appropriate in the ordinary course of its business, for purposes including but not limited to, ensuring proper use of resources and conducting routine network maintenance. By the utilizing in the schools district's computer network, users are indicating their consent to such monitoring and access. Where appropriate, communications including text, audio, video and images may be disclosed to law enforcement in response to proper requests, or to other third parties in the context of proper requests in the course of litigation without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

7. The Springfield Public Schools prohibits illegal distribution (otherwise known as pirating) of software. Any users caught transferring such files though the network, or whose accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts permanently revoked. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense that is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

8. If a user finds materials that are inappropriate while using the Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources s/he will refrain from downloading this material and shall not identify or share the material. It should be understood that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment.

9. Should a user, while using the Springfield Public Schools computer and information technology resources, encounter any material that s/he feels may constitute a threat against the safety of fellow students, staff members or the property of the Springfield Public School, that user is obligated to report his/her discovery of such materials to a teacher or to his/her principal.

10. The Springfield Public Schools administration reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

11. The Springfield Public Schools reserves its rights to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the district, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of electronic resources or vandalism.

**Web Page**

The Springfield Public Schools ("SPS") has established a district-wide webpage that links users to web pages for the district's individual schools. SPS maintains these web pages for educational purposes only, in furtherance of the educational mission of the SPS. All published pages and corresponding links to other sites must relate to SPS's educational mission.

<u>SUPERVISION AND APPROVAL OF WEB PAGES</u>
The Superintendent (or his/her designee) may select the person or persons ("the Webmaster") responsible for overseeing the SPS's web pages and maintaining the web pages in a manner consistent with this policy and the SPS's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (attached). The Webmaster will work with staff to make sure all links from the SPS web pages to other sites on the Internet are appropriate. District and school staff must ensure that the links are related to SPS's educational mission.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their professional projects or courses on their school's web site. Staff members must submit their material to the Webmaster for approval before the material can be published. Staff members may not publish or link to personal web pages as part of the SPS web site. Any evidence of such action by the staff may result in formal disciplinary actions by the SPS.

Student or staff work (e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork) may be published on the SPS web pages, as detailed below.

<u>CONTENT STANDARDS</u>
All web page materials are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard if there is acknowledgment of the developmental stage of the student(s). Web pages should be well-organized and professional in appearance. Web pages must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the school's web page.

<u>SAFETY PRECAUTIONS</u>
In general, identifying information about students, such as first and last names, personal phone numbers, or home addresses, will not be published without the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

Student photographs, identifying information and work:
- Student photographs, accompanied by first and/or last name, may be published only with the written consent of the student and the student's parent or guardian.
- Student work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, accompanied by first and/or last name, may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

Staff photographs, identifying information and work:
- Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
- A staff member's home phone number and address will not be published on the SPS web pages.
- Staff work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

The Springfield Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the services it is providing. The Springfield Public Schools will not be responsible for any damage you suffer including but not limited to loss of data, interruption of service, delays, non-deliveries, or mis-deliveries caused by any reason.

The Springfield Public Schools is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network, and use of any such information is at your own risk. The Springfield Public Schools will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the use of the network.

Parent and student will complete a signature page from the *Parent and Student Handbook*, indicating that they have read, understand and that the parent has explained the policy to their child. This signature will be kept at the school.


Cross Reference:
    SPS Bulling Policy
    SPS Anti-harassment Policy
    SPS Code of Conduct