Springfield Public Schools
Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

The Springfield Public School system offers Internet access to its students, faculty, and staff. Access to the school network and the Internet service is a privilege not a right. The intent of this policy is to ensure that users utilize this access in a manner consistent with the purpose of providing this Internet service. Parents and guardians are asked to review this policy and discuss it with their students.

The Internet is a global network linking computers around the world. Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. The primary purpose of the Springfield Public Schools Internet service is to support the educational objectives of the Springfield Public Schools and Springfield's educational community in general. Springfield's Internet service is not a public forum and the Springfield Public School system reserves the right to place reasonable limits on materials posted or accessed through the Springfield Internet service.

While the Internet's possibilities are tremendous, it also has potential for abuse. To use the Springfield Internet service the user must take full responsibility for his or her own actions. The Springfield Public Schools shall not be liable for the actions of anyone accessing the Internet through this or any other Internet connection. Users assume full responsibility for any cost, liabilities, or damages arising from the way the user chooses to use his/her access to this Internet service.

Network Usage Guidelines

All use of the Springfield Public Schools Internet service must be consistent with its purpose as stated above. This policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behaviors by users to this network. In any specific situation we rely upon each individual's judgment of appropriate conduct. To assist in such judgment, the following general guidelines are offered.

1. 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. You must immediately disclose to your teacher any message you receive that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable. No person will make arrangements to meet with anyone that he/she has met on the Internet or Springfield Public Schools Intranet
    c. Do not use the network in such a way as to disrupt its use by others.
    d. Remember the Internet service is a resource. Do not be wasteful.

e. Refrain from making defamatory remarks, sexual or racial slurs, and from using obscene or profane language.

f. Internet IDs and passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. Passwords should not be revealed or shared with anyone. Users must not use another person's password. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password you should change it immediately. Each account owner is responsible for all activity under that account.It is imperative that all users keep their passwords secret so that no one else can use their account.

2. Any use for, or in support of, illegal purposes or activities is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to other systems (computer hacking), arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above.

3. Any use for commercial purposes is prohibited. Users may not create web pages or other ways to advertise or sell products or services and may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the Springfield Internet service. This does not include school-approved activities.

4. Any use for political purposes is prohibited except for using the Internet service to communicate with elected or appointed officials.

5. Users should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright. Users shall not copy and forward, copy and download, or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the supervising teacher, the Director of Technology, the Assistant to the Superintendent, or the Superintendent or his designee. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited as to sources. See the Massachusetts Library Association Guide and the Library Media Center for the proper citation format to follow. Springfield Public Schools and its Internet service make no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data collected through the Internet.

6. Not all material accessible through the Internet is of educational value. Students are expected to refrain from seeking, accessing, or downloading material that is not relevant to their assignments or course work. No students may upload or download material to or from Internet sites without permission from his/her teacher. Students must not access chat rooms. Games must not be played, accessed or downloaded unless they are approved by the principal of the school and the teacher in charge. The Springfield Public School system will take reasonable precautions to filter out controversial materials. However, it is

impossible to monitor all materials and controversial information.

7. Users shall neither download nor install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks without prior permission of the Director of Technology, the Assistant to the Superintendent, the Superintendent or his designee. Users shall not change settings on the browser or any other application.

8. Users shall not upload, download, distribute pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, or threatening material of any nature. Users shall not upload, download, or distribute visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or (in the case of use by minors) harmful to minors.

9. Users shall not receive or transit information pertaining to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry.

10. Users must not attempt to get unauthorized access to any file servers in the Springfield Public School system, outside file servers, or go beyond the user's authorized access. This includes logging in through another person's account, accessing another person's files, or attempting to do either. Users shall not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

11. Users must not vandalize school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses by any other means.

Privacy

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. Network storage areas will be treated like school lockers, which may be inspected at anytime. The Springfield Public School system also reserves the right to examine all data stored on diskettes involved in the user's use of the Springfield Internet service. Internet messages are public communication and are not private.

All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receivers. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system in a responsible manner. The Springfield Public system reserves the right to monitor the online activities of users.

Electronic mail messages are backed up and may be inspected by appropriate school administrators. Springfield Public Schools reserves the right to inspect electronic mail and computer generated logs regarding web sites visited by users that the Springfield

Public Schools deems necessary and appropriate to ensure proper use of resources and to conduct routine network maintenance.

Violations

The Springfield Public Schools reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or take other disciplinary action, including suspensions or expulsion from school, for violations of this policy. Additionally, all handbook regulations apply to use of the Springfield Public Schools Internet and Intranet service. In the event that there is a claim that a student has violated any of the guidelines in this policy, she/he will be provided with written notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to be heard, unless otherwise specified by law. The Springfield Public Schools will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the Springfield Public Schools Internet service. The Springfield Public Schools also will cooperate fully with local, state and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the Springfield Public Schools Internet service.