

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Subject: Acceptable Use of Information Systems and Technology Resources	Date Approved: August 18, 1998 January 20, 2009 Date Revised: June 18, 2002 December 16, 2008 Date Effective: July 1, 2002 January 20, 2009

1. **PURPOSE:**
To establish guidelines for acceptable use of Somerset County Public School information technology systems, resources, the Internet and email.
2. **ACCEPTABLE USE:**
 - A. **Introduction**
The staff and students of Somerset County Public Schools are provided with access to information technology systems, resources, the Internet and email for educational purposes and to take advantage of the opportunity to teach, learn and communicate in our global society. Information technology resources include, but are not limited to, networks, computers, laptops, telephones, facsimiles and other wire and wireless equipment. Information systems include, but are not limited to, PowerSchool, PowerGrade, Performance Matters, the State IEP system, My Learning Plan, the AS400 Finance system, the Lawson's HR system and the Café Terminal System. SCPS realizes the potential for these resources to be used for purposes other than those for which they were intended. However, the school system firmly believes that the value of the information and the interaction available on the worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school system.
 - B. **Legal Context**
All existing federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulations and policies of Somerset County Public Schools are applicable to this AUP, including laws and regulations that are specific to technology and laws that may apply generally to personal conduct.
 - C. **Supervision and Monitoring**
Access to SCPS technology systems and resources is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate, unauthorized, and illegal use, including any violation of the conditions and rules in this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or revocation of the privilege. The Director of Planning & Technology and the Network Administrator have the authority to access user files in the normal course of their employment when necessary to protect the integrity of information technology systems and the property of SCPS. User files may be subject to search by law enforcement agencies under court order if such files contain information that may be used as evidence in a court of law. Although SCPS shall respect the privacy of users when reviewing and monitoring user accounts, users have no privacy expectation with regard to their use of any information system, network, email or technology resources. Even when used for personal reasons, the information technology resources and network, the user accounts, and all communications and information accessible via the network are the property of Somerset County Public Schools.

The Somerset County Public Schools has the right, but not the duty, to monitor, track, log, access and report all aspects of its information systems, network and technology resource use. Random audits of Internet activity and information system use will be run on a regular basis and any suspicious or inappropriate access will be reported to appropriate administrators. SCPS may access media brought onto its premises, at district events, or connected to the district's network to ensure compliance with this policy and other district policies.

D. End of Use

Staff access to SCPS technology systems will cease when employment is terminated. Student user access to SCPS technology systems will cease when the student user vacates the classroom environment because of expulsion, graduation, or relocation to a different school jurisdiction.

E. Filtering

In compliance with Public Law 106-554, The Children's Internet Protection Act and the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, measures will be taken to block or filter Internet access for all users. The purpose of filtering is to prevent users from visiting Internet sites that are considered inappropriate. However, the school system realizes that no filtering solution is 100% effective and the possibility still exists that some inappropriate content may be accessed.

F. CyberSafety

Somerset County Public Schools will make every possible effort to assure the safety of our students as they access the Internet through our technology resources during the school day. Cyber safety lessons are included in the students' technology curriculum. These lessons teach students about respecting other peoples' rights online, keeping their own identity private and establishing ground rules for using the Internet at school and at home.

G. Copyright & Intellectual Property Rights

SCPS staff and students are expected to comply with the procedures outlined in SCPS Policy #500-35 in the use of publications, software, video and audio recordings, and information found on the Internet to protect the authors of these works from infringement upon their legal rights. These procedures have been developed to adhere to federal copyright laws (see www.copyright.gov) and to the SCPS policy on the Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials Policy #500-19.

H. User Responsibilities

Staff and students are expected to use information systems and provided resources in a responsible, ethical and legal manner for school-related purposes in accordance with this policy, accepted guidelines of Digital Citizenship, and federal and state law.

1. The possession, use, transmission or importing of offensive, obscene, libelous, disruptive, or inflammatory language, pictures, or other material on any computer, electronic device or any information system within SCPS is prohibited.
2. The intentional disclosure, use or distribution of another adult's or any student's personally identifiable information is strictly prohibited.

3. The possession or use of any hardware or software that may circumvent or disable filtering or other technology security measures put in place by system administrators or encrypt data on any SCPS system or equipment is strictly prohibited. This includes the use of remote desktop software, modems and wireless cards on SCPS equipment while attached to the SCPS network or while in SCPS facilities.
4. Real time communication systems (such as Instant Messaging and chats) may only be used by students under the direct supervision of a teacher for school-related activities with permission from an administrator.
5. The violation of copyright, patent, or confidentiality laws is prohibited. This includes sharing, installing, recording or distribution of copyrighted software, audio and video media.
6. Intentionally obtaining, using, modifying or destroying files, passwords, or data belonging to other users without their consent is strictly prohibited. The use of hardware or software with the intention of stealing passwords, keystrokes or data is also prohibited.
7. Sharing passwords with others is prohibited. All users understand that they are responsible for any actions that occur under their account.
8. Knowingly performing actions that will disrupt the use of the any SCPS information system or network by others is a violation of this policy. This includes the responsible use of bandwidth.
9. Knowingly spreading computer viruses, worms, malware, spyware, Trojans, or any other computer software that is malicious in nature is strictly prohibited
10. Use of the system resources to threaten or harass others is prohibited. Any harassment or inappropriate message encountered should not be responded to and should be reported to an appropriate staff member.

The Superintendent, the Director of Planning & Technology, the Network Administrator, the Student Information Specialist and building administrators are delegated the authority to determine appropriate use and may request to deny, revoke, suspend or close any user account at any time based upon his/her determination of inappropriate use by the account holder or user. All requests are made to the Director of Planning & Technology who will document the request and subsequent action taken.

I. Consequences for Violations:

The use of information systems and technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the student/staff's access privilege being revoked or suspended. Misuse will also subject the student/staff to disciplinary action under individual school building policies and/or Somerset County Board of Education policies. In addition, any illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate agencies.

J. Website and Web-based Content Standards:

The primary purpose of operating websites is for SCPS students and staff to share information about curriculum, instruction, authorized activities and resources that enhances teaching, learning and communication.

All subject matter permitted on SCPS websites and any links to other web sites must relate to school business, curriculum and instruction, research that is related to the school system, supervised classroom projects and/or course work, and school related activities or organizations.

All information developed for a SCPS website must be free of spelling and grammatical errors not contain language and graphic art and/or photographs that are inappropriate, focus on violence, rude behavior, racism, blasphemy, and/or any and all provocative anti-social conduct.

SCPS websites must not include photos of individual students and no students in any photo will be identified. Websites may not contain the full name or other identifying personal information of a student and /or student's family members. If the parent or legal guardian of a student chooses not to have his/her child's picture posted on an SCPS website, the school must be notified in writing.

Student work will not be posted on a website without the permission of the student. A student's full name may not be used to identify work posted to the Internet. Teachers reserve the right to restrict the posting of student work they deem inappropriate.

Staff members who do not wish to have their pictures posted or their names used on school system websites should notify the Human Resources Department in writing.

K. SCPS Email

Email accounts provided by SCPS are to be used in a responsible, effective and lawful manner for school related purposes. All SCPS email accounts are the property of the school system. There should be no expectation of privacy in anything created, stored, sent or received through the SCPS email system. Emails can be monitored without prior notification if the administration deems it necessary. If there is evidence that this policy is being violated, the system administrators reserve the right to take disciplinary action, including termination of accounts and/or legal action.

Email Account holders have the following responsibilities:

1. Email attachments may not contain any personally identifiable student information (as defined in Policy 600-33).
2. SCPS Group names may not be used to send or forward non school related email.
3. The possession, sending or sharing of email messages which contain inappropriate language, photos or other material or that can be used to harass others is prohibited.
4. Sending email messages using another person's email account is prohibited.
5. Copying a message or attachment belonging to another user without permission is prohibited.
6. Disguising or attempt to disguise your identity when sending email messages is prohibited.
7. Users should not forward a message without acquiring permission from the sender.

All SCPS email accounts are archived and kept on file for a minimum of three years.

L. Disclaimer:

SCPS liability for use of its information systems and technology resources is limited to:

1. Information retrieved through SCPS computers, networks or online resources;
2. Information stored on SCPS media, hard drives or servers;
3. Notification to the users that if SCPS uses technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a fool-proof means for enforcing the provisions of local acceptable use policies;

4. Notification to users that all provisions of the AUP are subordinate to local, state and federal statute; and
5. While users are prohibited from accessing the Internet and e-mail for advertising, promotion, commercial purposes, religious activities, and any non-governmental-related fund raising or public relations activities, such as solicitation for religious purposes, lobbying for political purposes, or soliciting votes, SCPS does not condone and is not responsible for these and any and all activities in which users might engage.

M. Audio or Videotaping and/or Photographing

Audio or Videotapes and photographs of students may be utilized by teachers, administrators, or their designee for educational purposes within the school system without advanced consent of a student's parent/guardian.

Audio or Videotapes and/or photographs of students may be utilized by school system staff for educational purposes involving the viewing of the general public or persons outside of SCPS without Parent/Guardian permission when:

1. A student has voluntarily chosen or been allowed by his/her parent/guardian to participate in, or be a spectator at, a school-related activity that is open to the public such as an athletic event, concert, performance, etc.
2. The student has chosen to be an officially designated school leader or role model, such as an athlete, member of the homecoming court, student council, school media group, etc. for which there is a potential for informal contact with the media.
3. The student has voluntarily chosen to participate in a class project or school event.
4. Stock videotape footage or generic pictures are being obtained in classrooms or public places, such as playgrounds, parking lots and athletic fields, by the school or school system.

Audio or Videotapes and/or photographs of students may be utilized by school system staff for educational purposes involving the viewing of the general public or persons outside of SCPS require Parent/Guardian permission when:

1. Students are to be involved in a formal interview approved by the building principal using audio or videotapes and/or photographs by outside news media.
2. The student is identified as receiving special education or related services such as speech or physical therapy.
3. The student is identified as receiving any support services through the student services department.

Parents/guardians may request that individual photographs, audio or videotapes, interviews, and related information concerning their child or children not be used outside of the school system by completing and returning the Somerset County Acceptable Use and Media Release Form to their child's school. This form will not prevent audio or videotaping and/or pictures as described in section M of this policy.

All staff and students are required to sign the appropriate SCPS Acceptable Use and Media Release Form before they are granted access to the school system network.