

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) Department of Technology Services (DTS) provides access to an extensive array of Local Area Network/Wide Area Network (LAN/WAN) and web-based services and applications to staff and students. These network and Internet resources support the delivery of the division's program of studies, the Virginia Standards of Learning, and also assist with and enhance innovative instruction and educational excellence. Staff reviews network and Internet resources used in instruction.

A. Training and Access. Students and staff are provided with instruction on social and ethical issues of Internet use including copyright, plagiarism, and Internet safety and security. Additionally, students and staff are provided with instruction on the use of portable communication or privately owned electronic devices in the classroom. These devices include, but are not limited to: laptops, netbooks, tablets, iPads, cell phones, PDAs, e-readers and hand-held gaming devices.

1. Training includes:

- a. Internet safety review for students.
- b. Internet safety lessons integrated into instruction by classroom teachers and library/media specialists.
- c. Multimedia reminders of Internet safety and ethical behavior including safe use of portable communication or privately owned electronic devices used for instruction.

2. Under the terms and conditions stated in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), all authorized users have access to:

- a. Productivity and instructional applications via the Local Area Network (LAN).
- b. Virtual classroom instruction via distance learning services.
- c. Web-based electronic research and instructional services via the Wide Area Network (WAN).
- d. Internet access to news, LCPS and public library access to print and multimedia assets, and content-rich activities available from sites across the World Wide Web.
- e. Electronic communication locally, regionally and globally, including but not limited to electronic discussion groups, email, video conferences and white-board communications.
- f. Public domain multimedia files.

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3. Requirements for Access:
 - a. Every student using the LCPS network services, web-based resources and the Internet must have a parent/guardian signature on the "Student/Parent Technology Usage Form." The form, contained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) handbook, must be signed and returned to the school annually.
 - b. Every student will receive internet safety instruction annually.
 - c. Parents/guardians may revoke/reinstate access at any time after signing the opt-in form on the Student/Parent Technology Usage Form. This form is available at every LCPS school or on the website.
 - d. Employee users will sign the Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form.

B. Use of Network Services and the Internet is a Privilege, Not a Right

System users have no right of privacy nor an expectation of privacy for any activities conducted on any division computer system or the network, including but not limited to email or materials sent, received and/or stored on any division system. The LCPS website is not a public forum or a limited public forum for any purposes.

Division officials reserve the right to monitor and record all user activity. Any evidence of violation of this AUP, the Employee Handbook, School Board policy, or the Student Rights and Responsibility Handbook will be provided to division administrators and may result in disciplinary action including the loss of privileges to use LCPS technology resources, suspension, or expulsion. Any evidence of the use of LCPS technology resources in violation of local, state or federal law, may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution. Electronic communications received or sent by School Board members shall not be viewed or accessed by any LCPS employee, without expressed school board member permission, or as may be necessary to comply with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA) or with a lawfully issued subpoena or court order. School Board members shall be notified when their emails are accessed by LCPS staff, unless circumstances warrant otherwise (i.e., a law enforcement action or investigation which may be compromised by notifying the School Board member). This shall not prevent DTS staff from performing routine file, data, and system maintenance.

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1. LCPS Staff Responsibilities. LCPS staff will:
 - a. Monitor and evaluate Internet safety instruction for staff and students and update as needed.
 - b. Evaluate annually the division's technology infrastructure and the network, Internet and data security procedures in place.
 - c. Remain cognizant of the latest developments in Internet vulnerabilities, legal issues and capabilities related to instruction and impact on division students.
 - d. Provide professional development for all staff on the social and ethical issues of Internet use including copyright, fair use and plagiarism, and Internet safety and security.
 - e. Review this policy every two years.
 - f. Assess the need for community outreach related to Internet use and safety issues.
 - g. Provide frequent information related to Internet safety and security to parents and the community via available public media sources.
 - h. Block or filter internet access to pornography or obscenity.
 - i. Ensure that as appropriate, LCPS websites and applications protect student privacy by using encryption methodologies that meet and/or exceed accepted industry standards.

2. User Privileges
 - a. Students and staff may make use of all district technology, software and network services for approved instructional purposes such as research, communication and production only as provided by this policy. Projects and assignments may be posted electronically and could include personally identifiable information that may be classified as an educational record under FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act). Efforts will be made to restrict the amount of personally identifiable information when communicating electronically over the Internet. Assignments and activities conducted online may receive teacher comments, grades or evaluations; under no circumstances will comments, grades or evaluations be posted publicly.
 - b. Students and staff may access information from outside resources via the Internet that facilitates or supports learning and educational activities. During school hours or when using school equipment, student Internet use must occur in a supervised environment and students must use the wireless access provided by LCPS so that the LCPS internet filters properly block certain material as required by law.

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- c. Students and staff may download and transfer data files necessary for approved daily instruction over the network provided that such activity does not violate copyright or other laws, does not alter programs or otherwise damage LCPS technology, no fees are incurred, and/or no freeware, shareware, games or other executable files are placed on the school division network.
 - d. Students may use portable communication or privately owned electronic devices for instructional activities as directed by school staff and as set forth in this policy.
3. User Responsibilities
- a. Any user under age 18 must have a parent/legal guardian sign this agreement prior to first use of any network service or Internet access. Users age 18 or older must sign this agreement prior to first use of any network service or Internet access.
 - b. Users must maintain the privacy and security of passwords and accounts and shall not share their passwords or network access with other users. Users shall not attempt to learn another user's password, access another user's account or impersonate another user on the network.
 - c. Users may not operate any division technology for commercial use, personal gain or product advertisement.
 - d. Users shall not be connected to the school division's network through an Ethernet patch cable.
 - e. Users shall respect the property of others. Users shall not access, modify or delete any network files, documents, applications or data files belonging to others. Vandalism, defined as a malicious attempt to harm or destroy another user's data or network service, will result in cancellation of privileges and disciplinary action.
 - f. Users should use caution in forwarding emails to persons outside of the school system to ensure student privacy and to protect personally identifiable information.
 - g. Users shall not attach unauthorized equipment to the network that serves the data and voice systems without express authorization in writing from DTS. (Televisions and VCRs may be attached to the cable TV distribution system without express authorization.) Data

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connection prohibitions include but are not limited to computer workstations, laptops/notebooks/tablet PCs, file servers, printers, networkable scanners, network switches or hubs, routers, smart/cell phone combination units and all other wired or wireless devices. This prohibition includes connecting to the network via a non-LCPS supported wireless access point.

- h. Users shall utilize proper network and email etiquette. Harassment, discriminatory remarks, hate mail and threats, obscene or vulgar language, and conduct prohibited by the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, the Employee Handbook, School Board policy, or by law are prohibited in email or other electronic communications. Users shall not use LCPS equipment or technology to send, receive, view or download illegal material. Students shall be prevented from having access to material deemed harmful to juveniles as defined by law.
- i. Users shall properly use and care for all hardware and ancillary computer and network equipment available for use at any division site. Vandalism or destruction of any technology or related component will result in cancellation of privileges, disciplinary action and restitution to the school division.
- j. Users shall be responsible for all material in his/her network account and agree to maintain the account free from pornographic, undesirable or inappropriate materials, files or emails. Users shall prevent such materials from entering the network via the Internet or other source. Personal software may not be installed on any division hardware. Users shall adhere to the Copyright Act of 1976. Transmission of any material in violation of federal or state law or regulation is prohibited and will be dealt with according to criminal statutes and the Student Conduct Code.
- k. Any staff member or student who gains access to inappropriate or undesirable Internet materials, becomes aware of a network or hardware security problem, copyright or fair use infringement, or any Internet safety issue shall immediately notify DTS or Department of Instruction for assistance.
- l. Users shall be cautious when opening suspicious email or other file attachments from unknown sources to prevent virus, malware, and other malicious attacks that could compromise the network.

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C. Safeguards. The Loudoun County Public Schools will take precautions to restrict access to undesirable or inappropriate materials using firewalls, encryption schematics and filtering applications and other security measures as well as provide error-free, dependable access to electronic resources via the LAN. Division teachers and staff will monitor user activity in classrooms, labs and libraries and will pursue appropriate disciplinary actions based on the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook or criminal statutes as appropriate for any violations of this AUP. Appropriate and safe use of the Internet is the responsibility of students, parents and Loudoun County Public Schools staff.

D. Disclaimer. The Loudoun County Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, for the network services it provides. LCPS is not responsible for any damages users may incur, including loss of data due to delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, equipment failures or service interruptions. LCPS is not responsible for the accuracy, nature or quality of information gathered from the Internet. LCPS is not responsible for personal property used to access division hardware or networks or the Internet or for any financial obligations resulting from Internet access provided by the division.

E. External Links

1. Purpose. It is useful to parents, students and staff for links to be included on the LCPS website to websites outside LCPS's control. The LCPS website is not a public forum or a limited public forum for any purposes. Links to external websites from the LCPS website are established and maintained in accordance with these guidelines and must serve the educational mission of the school division. This policy provides reasonable guidelines which are viewpoint neutral on when and how links to external sources are permitted. Links to external websites may only be requested by teachers, principals, senior staff, superintendent's cabinet, and School Board members. LCPS shall warn all users when leaving the LCPS website that they do so at their own risk, that LCPS is not responsible for the content of linked sites, that LCPS does not endorse, approve, certify or control external websites, or any content posted on an external website.

2. Link Guidelines for Establishing a Link from LCPS to an External Website. Using the following acceptance criteria, LCPS principals and building administrators (or their supervisor) will review links associated with their respective school, facility, department or program under their supervision and decide whether it is appropriate and relevant in accordance with this policy. These guidelines will also govern the links requested by School Board members. All links must serve or be strictly related to the educational mission of the school division and no link will be permitted to an inappropriate website, which includes any website that:

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- a. Exhibits hate, bias, discriminatory, lewd, obscene, pornographic, libelous, profane or otherwise defamatory content;
- b. Advocates or promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, or illegal drugs;
- c. Promotes or makes available adult or sexually oriented entertainment or materials;
- d. Promotes the unlawful possession of weapons, illegal gambling, or encourages the violation of law, School Board policies, or the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook;
- e. Advocates for or against a candidate for public office or promotes or opposes a ballot proposition, except the School Board may authorize a link to an external site on school-related ballot issues officially supported by the Loudoun County School Board; and
- f. Contains unauthorized commercial advertisements.

F. Forms and Violations

1. Student and parents will sign annually the attached Student/Parent Technology Usage Form which can be found in the Students' Rights & Responsibilities Handbook. Violations by students may result in discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion as well as possible criminal prosecution.

2. Employees will sign annually the Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form. Violations by employees could result in discipline up to and including termination and/or possible criminal prosecution.

[Former Policy 3-3]

Adopted: 02/24/15

Revised: 10/27/15

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, [§22.1-70.2](#); [Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. §§ 101-810](#); and [Digital Millennium Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 512, 1201–1205, 1301–1332; 28 U.S.C. § 4001](#)

