

Internet Acceptable Use Guidelines Union County Public Schools

The Internet, a worldwide network of computer networks, allows a user to communicate with any person on any of the Internet networks or login to a variety of computer services that reside on the Internet. The Internet includes more than 5,000 regional, state, federal, university and corporate networks in the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, Australia, Central America and South America.

Each school in Union County will have access to the resources of the Internet to enhance instruction. The goal of the school system in establishing Internet access is to provide an additional informational resource to students and teachers, to facilitate collaborative instructional projects, and to communicate with others in support of the instructional goals of Union County Public Schools. Possible instructional uses of the Internet include:

- accessing information in many libraries, companies, agencies
- participating in discussion groups on a variety of subjects
- collaborating with other educators and/or students on instructional projects
- sending and receiving electronic mail.

Through the Internet, students and teachers have access to a worldwide electronic information superhighway. With access to computers and subscribers all over the world, students and teachers may access materials that may not be appropriate in a school setting and that do not conform to the guidelines of the Union County Instructional Materials Selection Policy. On a global computer network, as with print media, it is impossible to control all materials and the determined user may find controversial and/or insensitive content or information that may be offensive to some.

Although the school system will provide software that blocks access to sexually explicit materials on the Internet, new sites appear daily. Benefits to students such as access to information resources, the practice of electronic research skills, and opportunities for collaboration far exceed the disadvantages of possibly accessing controversial materials. Union County school personnel will monitor student use of the Internet as much as reasonably possible to insure that the Internet connection is used to access appropriate materials that support the curriculum.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the user who must adhere to strict guidelines that mandate ethical and legal usage of the network resources as well as adherence to school and system codes of conduct. If a student violates any of these provisions, his or her privilege to use the Internet will be terminated and future access can be denied, as well as disciplinary measures being imposed.

Internet Access – Terms and Conditions

Acceptable Use – The use of the account must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the instructional objectives of the school system. Non-educational games are not consistent with this philosophy and may not be played on the school's account.

Use of other networks or computing resources must comply with the rules of that network. Transmission of any materials in violation of federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted materials, threatening or obscene materials, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

Privileges – While the Internet can provide access to information and encourage the exchange of ideas among all students, the use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. School and district administrators will decide what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. An account may be closed or access denied to a student at any time deemed necessary for unacceptable Internet use. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level if needed.

Network etiquette- Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Be polite. Do not become abusive in your messages to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Do not reveal your school name and address, your personal address or phone number or those of others.
- Remember that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. System operators do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by others.
- All communications and information on the Internet are assumed to be private property.

Warranties – The Union County Public School System makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The Union County Public School System will not be responsible for any damages suffered, including loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the learner's own risk. The Union County Public School System is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet.

Security – Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If a student can identify a security problem, he/she must notify a system administrator and must not demonstrate the problem to other users. A student must not use another individual's name or account. Attempts to log in to the system as any other user or as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or who has a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

Vandalism – Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or agency connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Abstaining from Use – Parents must notify their school administration in writing if they wish for their child to abstain from internet use.