



Sparta Area Schools - Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Purpose of Technology Use

Sparta Area Schools provides technology resources to its students solely for educational purposes. Through technology, Sparta Area Schools provides access for students and staff to resources from around the world. Expanding technologies take students and staff beyond the confines of the classroom, and provide tremendous opportunities for enhancing, extending, and rethinking the learning process. The goal in providing these resources is to promote educational excellence at Sparta Area Schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication with the support and supervision of parents, teachers, and support staff.

The Opportunities and Risks of Technology Use

With access to computers and people all over the world comes the potential availability of material that may not be considered to be of education value in the context of the school setting, or that may be harmful or disruptive. Because information on networks is transitory and diverse, Sparta Area Schools cannot completely predict or control what users may or may not locate. The Board of Education believes that the education value of limited access to the information, interaction, and research capabilities that technology offers outweighs the possibility that users may obtain or encounter material that is not consistent with the educational goals of Sparta Area Schools.

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, Sparta Area Schools installs and operates filtering software to limit users' internet access to materials that are obscene, pornographic, harmful to children, or otherwise inappropriate, or disruptive to the educational process, notwithstanding that such software may in certain cases block access to other materials as well. At the same time, Sparta Area Schools cannot guarantee that filtering software will in all instances successfully block access to materials deemed harmful, indecent, offensive, pornographic, or otherwise inappropriate. The use of filtering software, does not negate or otherwise affect the obligations of users to abide by the terms of this policy and to refrain from accessing such inappropriate materials.

No technology is guaranteed to be error free or totally dependable, nor is it safe when used irresponsibly. Among other matters, Sparta Area Schools is not liable or responsible for:

- Any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical, or other difficulties;
- The accuracy or suitability of any information that is retrieved through technology;
- Breaches of confidentiality;
- Defamatory material; or
- The consequences that may come from failure to follow Sparta Area Schools policies or procedures governing the use of technology.

Privileges and Responsibilities

Sparta Area Schools electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use. Student users may access technology for only education purposes. The actions of student users accessing networks through Sparta Area Schools reflect on the district, therefore, student users must conduct themselves accordingly by exercising good judgment and complying with this policy and any accompanying administrative regulations and guidelines. Students are responsible for their behavior and communications using Sparta Area Schools computers and networks.

Student users of technology shall:

- Comply with copyright laws and software licensing agreements;
- Understand that email and network files are not private. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and monitor responsible student use;
- Respect the privacy rights of others;
- Be responsible at all times for the proper use of technology, including proper use of access privileges, complying with all required system security identification codes, and not sharing any codes or passwords;
- Maintain the integrity of technology resources from potentially damaging messages, physical abuse, or viruses;
- Abide by the policies and procedures of networks and systems linked by technology.

Student users of technology shall not:

- Access, download, create, send or display offensive messages or pictures;
- Use harassing, offensive, obscene or defamatory language;
- Harass or attack others;
- Vandalize or damage computer equipment, systems, networks, hardware, software, data, or programs;
- Knowingly spread computer viruses;
- Violate copyright laws or software licensing agreements;
- Use others' passwords or accounts;
- Misrepresent themselves or others;
- Trespass in others' folders, work, or files or gain unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Reveal their personal address or phone number, or those of other users;
- Use Sparta Area Schools technology for non-school purposes or personal financial gain or to access or attempt to access restricted websites or other information unrelated to the curriculum and educational purposes of the school; and
- Use technology for any illegal purpose or activity.

Students may access the networks and technology resources only after submitting a signed Acceptable Use of Technology consent form in paper form or online. Parent or guardian permission is also required for minors.

Disciplinary Actions

Violations of this policy, or any administrative regulations and guidelines governing the use of technology, may result in disciplinary action which could include loss of network access, loss of technology use, suspension or expulsion, or other appropriate disciplinary action. Violations of local, state or federal law may subject students to prosecution by appropriate law enforcement authorities.

No Expectation of Privacy

Sparta Area Schools electronic network is part of curriculum and is not a public forum for general use. Users should not expect that email or files stored on district servers will be private. Sparta Area Schools reserves the right to log technology use, to monitor fileserver space utilization by users, and to examine users' files and materials as needed, and at its discretion. Users must recognize that there is no assurance of confidentiality with respect to access to transmissions and files by persons outside, or from persons inside the district.

Additional Rules/Actions

The Superintendent/Principal or his/her designee may establish regulations and guidelines, and shall take appropriate action to implement this policy.

Student Consent

I understand that my computer use is not private and that the school district will monitor my activity on the computer system. I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and regulations and agree to abide by these rules. I understand that violation of the policy or regulations may result in disciplinary action, including loss of technology use, suspension or expulsion.

Printed Student Name _____ Student Signature _____

Parental Consent

I have read and understand Sparta Area Schools Acceptable Use Policy and regulations. In consideration for my child being able to use the district's electronic communications system and have access to the public networks, I hereby release the school district its operators and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the system, including without limitation the types of damage identified in the district's policy and administrative regulations.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____