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Lincoln Public Schools Computer and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

Scope

The Lincoln Public Schools Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) is designed to provide guidance to users in deciding what is considered appropriate use of technology within the Lincoln Public School district.

Background

Electronic information resources offer access to the world. Students and staff have access to email, school libraries, public libraries and university libraries, as well as news from a variety of sources.

Our schools are online and in many homes children are accessing commercial services, social networking sites, and the Internet. During school, teachers guide students toward relevant and appropriate electronic materials. Outside of school, families have the same responsibility for guidance as they have with television, telephones, movies, radio and other media.

The following guidelines are intended to provide a base from which school policies regarding access to electronic resources can be tailored. The emphasis of this policy is to guide appropriate use; there is no intent to diminish the vital nature of electronic information services. The concerns described here are real, but they should not discourage schools from planning for the appropriate use of one of education's most valuable tools.

Technology Committee Role

The district Technology Committee is composed of school committee members, administrators, teachers, library media personnel, and parents. It will be chaired by the IT Specialist who has overall responsibility for student use of electronic information resources.

The committee will develop and publish procedures concerning the use of electronic resources in the Lincoln school system. It will provide current users, potential users, and parents with information that implements these policies. The primary purposes of the committee are to devise ways to protect students in the electronic environment, develop processes for reporting policy abuses, and to design methods to prevent reoccurrences of policy abuse.

Use of the Lincoln Public Schools network (LincNet) will be permitted upon agreement with the following terms.

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The network will be used

- For educational purposes which are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Lincoln Public Schools
- In ways that are not harmful to others or their property and are within the law
- To protect oneself and others by not issuing any personal postal addresses or telephone numbers over the computer network or the Internet, remembering that such communications are not necessarily private
- With permission of staff members who are in charge of it, or with permission of supervising teachers
- With consideration of others while on the computer network (LincNet), abiding by the same rules that apply in school
- In a secure manner, by not importing files from unknown or disreputable sources
- Responsibly by everyone. Users should immediately report any problems or breaches of these responsibilities to the supervising staff member

What follows is a robust list of uses that are not permitted. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

- To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or in support of such activities
- To transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, harassing or threatening language or images
- To violate any local, state, or federal statute
- To damage or disable the property of another individual or organization
- To access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission
- To violate copyright or otherwise use intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission
- To conduct commercial activity (defined as buying, selling, bartering, or advertising), including, but not limited to, the use of credit cards
- To steal data, equipment, or intellectual property
- To gain unauthorized access to the files of others (students, teachers, system administrator), or misuse the data or files of another user
- To gain or seek to gain unauthorized access to resources or entities
- To send fraudulent electronic mail messages, use an account owned by another user, or to invade the privacy of individuals
- To possess any data that represents a violation of these rules whether in paper, digital or any other form
- To disrupt and/or degrade computer networks, supporting equipment, or information available on them, including but not limited to tampering with hardware or software, vandalizing data, introducing or using computer viruses, or attempting to gain access to restricted information on networks.

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Sanctions

- **Privileges.** The use of the computers and Internet within the Lincoln Public Schools is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to denial of access to computers and/or the Internet.
- **Vandalism.** Vandalism will result in disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as a willful or ignorant defacing, disabling, or destruction of data of another user, software, computers, peripherals, or other network resources. This also includes, but is not limited to, uploading, creating or transmitting computer viruses.
- **Security.** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Attempts to login to the system as any other user or to share a password will result in school disciplinary action. If a security problem is identified, the user must notify the supervising teacher. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users.
- **Privacy.** System administrators may review files and communications at any time to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. There should be no presumption of privacy for communications stored, sent, received or accessed through the Lincoln Public Schools computers, network, e-mail system, and Internet connection. It is a matter of law that any document pertaining to the public business on a publicly funded system is a public record. All electronic correspondence and data is subject to the discovery process based upon the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
- **Disciplinary Action.** Disciplinary action may be taken in the event that the provisions of this policy are violated. The disciplinarian administrator and the technology department will have discretion in deciding on what action, if any, will be taken against persons violating the provisions of this policy. Handling of violations to this policy may vary according to the particular situation. Where the use of the computer is an integral part of the instructional program, violators need to be disciplined immediately and regain access to the computer so that instruction may continue.

Disciplinary action may consist of:

1. Parent Contact
2. Restitution/Restoration for damages and time involved
3. Detention
4. Suspension
5. Legal Action
6. Access Suspended

If a student's access is suspended as a result of violations, the student may appeal the suspension to the school principal. Employee violations of the Acceptable Use Policy will be handled in accordance with law, school policy, and collective bargaining agreements, as applicable.

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- **Disclaimer.** The Lincoln Public Schools will not be responsible for any damages suffered, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, service interruptions, or inaccurate information.

Effective Dates – This policy becomes effective July 1, 2010. All other policies remain in effect until superseded.

Policy Adopted: July 28, 2009
Amended Policy First Reading: April 12, 2010
Amended Policy Second Reading: May 17, 2010
Amended Policy Adopted: May 17, 2010

TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island

**LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCESS (LincNet)**

USER PERMISSION AND WAIVER FORM

We are pleased to offer students of the Lincoln Public Schools access to the district computer network for electronic mail and the Internet. To gain access to e-mail and the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental or guardian permission and must sign and return this form each school year.

By signing this User Permission and Waiver form, I _____ (print name) and my parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to abide by the Lincoln Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy. I have discussed the Lincoln Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy with my parent(s) or guardian(s).

Further, my parent(s) or guardian(s) and I have been advised that the Lincoln Public Schools and its employees do not have control of the information available on the Internet. Some sites that are available may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. While the Lincoln Public Schools intent is to make Internet access available in order to further its educational goals and objectives, account holders may attempt to access other materials as well.

The Lincoln Public Schools believes that the benefits to students and educators from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, far exceed any disadvantages of access. Ultimately, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of minors are responsible for setting and conveying standards that their children should follow. To that end, the Lincoln Public Schools supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for computer network and Internet access.

Any questions should be directed to the school principal or district IT Specialist. The Lincoln Public Schools Computer and Internet Acceptable Policy and procedures are available on the district website and on request for review by all parents and guardians. In addition, parents and guardians have the option of requesting alternative activities not requiring Internet use for their minor children.

The student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) must understand that student access to the computing networks and Internet (LincNet) connections exist to support the Lincoln Public Schools educational responsibilities and mission. The specific conditions and services that are offered will change from time to time. In addition, the Lincoln Public Schools makes no warranties with respect to the computer network or Internet (LincNet) connection, and it specifically assumes no responsibility for:

1. The content of any advice or information received by a student from sources outside the school district, or any costs or charges incurred as a result of seeing or accepting such information;
2. Any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the student chooses to use his/her Lincoln Public Schools network access;
3. Any consequences of service interruptions or changes, even if these disruptions arise from consequences of service interruptions or changes, even if these disruptions arise from circumstances under the control of the Lincoln Public Schools.

**LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Student - Parent/Guardian Acceptance and Permission

The Student (user):

I have received my parent(s)/guardian(s) permission and I have read the **Lincoln Public Schools “Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.”** I understand and agree to all the provisions, rules and regulations outlined within. I understand that any violation of the Lincoln Public Schools Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy will result in immediate suspension of my Internet privileges and that as a result of such violation further disciplinary measures may be taken.

Print Student’s Name	Student’s Signature	Date
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School Name	Grade
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The Parent/Guardian:

As the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the above named student. I have read the **Lincoln Public Schools Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy** and I understand and agree to all the provisions, rules and regulations outlined within. I hereby give permission for my child to use the Internet service provided by the Lincoln Public Schools. I do understand that my child is required to follow this policy. I further understand that there is a potential for my son/daughter to access information on the Internet that is inappropriate for students and that every reasonable effort will be made on the part of the faculty and staff of the Lincoln Public Schools to monitor access to such information, but that my son/daughter is ultimately responsible for restricting himself/herself from inappropriate information.

_____ I give permission for my son/daughter to be granted Internet access.

_____ I request that my son/daughter be denied Internet access and be provided alternative activities not requiring Internet use.

Print Parent/Guardian’s Name	Parent/Guardian’s Signature	Date
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This form will be retained by the school.

Amended: May 17, 2010

**LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Staff Acceptance

Each staff member must read and sign this form prior to accessing district Internet facilities.

Name: _____

Position/Grade: _____

School(s): _____

I understand and will abide by the terms and conditions for Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for the Lincoln Public Schools. I further understand that any violation of the regulations is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. If I commit any violation, my access privileges may be suspended, revoked, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please sign & return to the Lincoln School Human Resources Department for inclusion in Personnel file

Amended: May 17, 2010