

Shoals Community School Corporation

Electronic & Communication Resources Usage Policy



**Approved January 13, 2005
Shoals Community School Board**

Shoals Community School Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources Usage Policy

1. Policy Statement.

It is the objective of the Board of School Trustees of the Shoals Community School Corporation to provide electronic and communication resources to its school community for the purpose of promoting student achievement and the efficient operation of the School Corporation, while protecting confidential information from disclosure to unauthorized persons.

In the pursuit of this objective, the Board expects school community members permitted to utilize the School Corporation's electronic and communication resources to do so in a manner consistent with this policy.

2. Scope of this Policy.

This policy applies to all users of wired and wireless telephone service, internet access, voice mail, e-mail, truck mail, facsimile transmission and receipt ("fax") and wired or wireless computer based research and communication provided by the School Corporation.

3. Definition of Terms Used in this Policy.

"Communications resources" as used in this policy means "electronic resources" as defined below and "truck mail" services provided by the School Corporation.

"Confidential information" as used in this policy means information that is declared confidential by state or federal law or Board Policy on access to public records.

"Electronic resources" as used in this policy includes wired and cellular telephone, two-way radio, voice mail, e-mail, internet access, wired or wireless computer access, facsimile transmission and receipt, and other computer resources whether used for research or communication.

"Network Administrator" as used in this policy means the School Corporation employee assigned by the Superintendent to oversee the operation of the School Corporation computer network.

"Proprietary information" as used in this policy means information in which a person or entity has recognized interest such as a registered copyright.

"School Corporation" as used in this policy means the Shoals Community School Corporation.

"Board" means the governing body of this School Corporation.

"Truck mail" as used in this policy means paper and package intra-school corporation routing and delivery services provided by the School Corporation without U.S. postage affixed.

"User" as used in this policy means a person using the School Corporation's communication resources and includes but is not limited to students, employees, volunteers, and independent contractors retained by the School Corporation.

4. Penalties for Violation of this Policy.

Negligent, knowing, and intentional violations of this policy will have significant consequences such as denial of access, suspension or expulsion of a student or volunteer, and discipline including suspension without pay and discharge of an employee.

5. Ownership of School Corporation Electronic Resources & Information Stored on Them.

School Corporation Ownership. The electronic resources provided by the School Corporation and all information contained in or on them and all information transmitted on or stored on them are at all times the property of the School Corporation, subject to any proprietary interest existing before the entry of the information on the School Corporation electronic resources, such as properly identified and registered copyright interest. In no case are these electronic resources or the information stored on or in them owned, rented, loaned, or leased by users to the exclusion of authorized School Corporation administrators. Documents and other data created or stored on School Corporation electronic resources may be protected by copyright by the author and reproduced by a duly authorized licensee, but this ownership interest shall not be utilized to deny access to information stored or reproduced through School Corporation electronic resources.

No Expectation of Privacy. No user shall have an expectation of privacy in any information created, received, or stored on the School Corporation's electronic resources. If a user transmits or receives messages on the School Corporation's electronic resources such as e-mail, voice mail, or facsimile, the content of such a communication is subject to investigation, search, retrieval, and review in accordance with this policy. Confidential communications shall not be transmitted on School Corporation electronic resources except where the confidential or privileged communication is on behalf of the School Corporation and not an individual user.

Information as Public Records. Users of School Corporation's electronic resources are on notice by this policy that messages and other information transmitted, stored, or received on the School Corporation's electronic resources may become a "public record" under the Indiana Access to Public Records Act, Indiana 5-14-3 ["APRA"]. Messages and information are subject to disclosure by the School Corporation pursuant to APRA request without further notice to the user.

No User Installed Password Barrier or Encryption. A user of the School Corporation's electronic resources who makes use of a password, code or encryption device or restrict or inhibit access to a School Corporation electronic resource shall provide immediate unlimited access to this data when requested to do so by the User's supervisor, if an employee, or teacher or principal, if a student. A user's supervisor (if an employee) or principal or teacher (if a student) is authorized by this Policy to override, void, or destroy any code, password, or encryption device to access any information stored on or accessible through a School Corporation electronic resource.

Disclosure of Password. Except as provided above, no person shall request or require that a user reveal a password or access code for any School Corporation electronic resource. A supervisor, principal, or teacher with a legitimate school need to review the electronic resource usage of a user shall contact the administrator of the electronic resource as provided for in Section Seven [7] of this Policy for access rather than request that the user reveal the user's password or access code.

6. Procedure for Inspecting the Communication Resource Usage of a User.

In case where electronic messages, documents, files or other communication resources must be accessed or read, the person who desires access to such materials shall notify the administrator and the employee's immediate supervisor (or student's teacher and principal) explaining the reason for the request. The supervisor (teacher, principal) shall submit a request to review the communication resource usage of a user

in writing or by e-mail to the Network Administrator. The Network Administrator shall forward each request to the Superintendent with a recommended disposition and the Superintendent shall have the authority to grant or deny the request for access.

7. Appropriate & Prohibited Uses of Communication Resources.

General Rule Use. Any use of the School Corporation’s communication resources must be consistent with the educational mission and objectives of the School Corporation. Misuse of communication resources may result in denial of access to those communication resources. The Network Administrator shall monitor the use of all School Corporation communication resources and shall be authorized to immediately suspend any user’s access to a communication resource pending review of any alleged misuse by the appropriate supervisor. “Appropriate Supervisor” for purposes of this section means the principal of the building to which an employee or student is assigned or the Superintendent in the case of an administrator.

Student Internet Access. Students will be permitted access to the Internet through School Corporation electronic resources unless a parent/guardian has signed and returned a “Student Electronic Resources Restriction Form” for the current school year.

Examples of Unacceptable Uses. The following shall not be accessed, created, transmitted, or stored on School Corporation’s communication resources:

- a. Obscene, pornographic, or sexually explicit materials.
- b. Information that enable or support the commission of a crime or an act that would endanger the user or others or damage property.
- c. A message from a person not authorized to use School Corporation communication resources. Offers to buy or sell goods or services from an individual or private business or entity.
- d. Jokes, comments, or messages that contain content that is demeaning to a group of people, defamatory, harassing, threatening, objectively offensive, or disruptive to the intended recipient. Examples of information that violate this provision include harassment in violation of board policy, sexual comments or images, pornography, and racial, ethnic, disability, or religious slurs.
- e. Information that hides or attempts to hide the identity of the sender, or misrepresents the identity of the sender.
- f. Information that would enable a user to obtain access to the information or e-mail of others without authorization.
- g. Messages or information not related to School Corporation business.
- h. A computer virus or other message that is known by the sender to have a capability to damage or impair the operation of a School Corporation electronic resource or another person or organization’s communication resource.
- i. Logging into the network with another users name and password.
- j. The use of any software/hardware not networked or provided by the School Corporation (this includes but not limited to computer games, public domain software and portable devices), which has not been authorized for use by the Network Administrator.
- k. Obtaining access to any part of the computer system that is not available through your log-in. Examples include but not limited to the use of systems disks, system key shortcuts.

- l. Downloading or listening to audio and movie clips unless used for educational purpose. Examples included but not limited to MP3, Real Audio, WAV, MPEG, AVI, Etc.
- m. Electronic & Communication Resources is for school education related purpose. Game playing, shopping, surfing, etc. for personal use is not authorized for students, but is allowed for staff prior to 8:00 a.m. and after 3:30 p.m.
- n. The Electronic & Communication Resources are not to be used for economic gain. Examples include but not limited to home business, stock trading, auctions, items for sale, etc.
- o. Information in support of a candidate or group of candidates for elected office at the local, state, and national level *other than information about how to register to vote*.
- p. Downloading, uploading, possessing or using pirated or illegally software, plug-ins, etc..

It shall not be a violation of this policy for an employee to use School Corporation electronic resources to communicate concerning an organization consisting solely of employees of the School Corporation, except for the purpose of campaigning in a representation election conducted pursuant to Ind. Code 20-7.5-1-10(c)4.

Limited Use for Employee Personal Messages. In recognition of the desire of School Corporation employees to communicate with each other concerning issues of common interest that are not related to School Corporation business, the School Corporation has created a separate distribution list called the “opt-in list” that includes all School Corporation employees who have indicated a willingness to receive non-school information. An employee wishing to send a personal e-mail to School Corporation employees must send the proposed e-mail to the principal for review and distribution. Messages about births, deaths, illness, marriage, relocation may be distributed by the principal using the “opt-in list”. A message that does not meet the standards for messages in the Section other than the requirement that the message be relevant to School Corporation business will not be posted by the principal.

8. Use of School Corporation Resources by Exclusive Representative of Employees.

Use for Union Business. School Corporation employees are authorized to use School Corporation Truck Mail to conduct School Corporation business. For purposes of this section “School Corporation business” does not include communication relating to the business of a “school employee organization” as defined at Ind. Code 20-7.5-1-2(k).

Limitation on Use in Representation Election Campaign. No person shall use School Corporation communication resources or permit School Corporation communication resources to be used by another person to further the interests of one employee organization in a representation election. During a representation election campaign, School Corporation communication resources may be used to communicate information about the time, manner, location, and results of voting if the content of the message is prepared or approved in advance by a representative of the Indiana Education Employment Relations Board.

9. Confidentiality & Copyright Protection.

Confidential Information Stored or Transmitted. Users of the School Corporation’s communication resources are expected to protect the integrity of proprietary and confidential information maintained by the School Corporation. “Confidential information” as used in this policy means is information declared confidential by the Board’s policy on Access to Public Records or by State or Federal law. Confidential information shall never be transmitted or forwarded to a person not authorized to receive the information.

Creation & Use of Lists. Any distribution list created by a user may be reviewed by the Network Administrator for relevance to School Corporation business and compliance with this Policy. The practice of using electronic resource distribution lists to send information shall not excuse the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information by a user. Users shall determine if a distribution list is current and review each name on any list before sending confidential information including but not limited to personally identifiable student records protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Monitor Protection. Messages containing confidential information should not be left visible on the monitor when a user is away from his or her computer.

Change of Passwords. E-mail, voice mail, and network sign on passwords shall be changed on a schedule established by the Network Administrator. Failure to change a password shall result in suspension of access to the communications resource until the password is changed.

Protection of Copyright Interests. Users should not copy or distribute through the e-mail system any copyrighted material of the third party (such as software, database files, articles, graphic files and downloaded information) unless the user has confirmed in a paper or electronic form in advance that the School Corporation has a license or other right to copy or distribute the material. Violation of the rights of a copyright owner will result in discipline of a student or employee.

10. Security of School Corporation Electronic Resources.

Isolation of Problems. Security on any School Corporation electronic resource is a high priority when the resource involves many users and contains proprietary and confidential information. A user shall immediately notify the Network Administrator if a security problem is identified on any School Corporation electronic resource. The problem shall not be demonstrated to other users.

Use of Another User's Password. A user shall not attempt to obtain or use another user's password, sign-on, or account without written permission from that user and a Network Administrator. An unauthorized attempt to log onto any electronic resource as a Network Administrator will result in discipline including termination for employees and expulsion for students.

Denial of Access. A user identified as a security risk based upon one or more violations of this policy may be denied access to all School Corporation electronic resources.

User Notes

- ☞ With the renewed interest in access to public records generated by the creation of a Public Access Counselor, this policy reminds users that their electronic communications *even when deleted* can be requested under the Indiana Access to Public Records Act, Ind. Code 5-14-3.

- ☞ This policy supports a "search" of e-mail and other stored information by telling users that they should not have a "legitimate expectation of privacy" in any information stores on school district resources. This policy will be "Exhibit A" in a disciplinary action resulting from a search of Electronic & Communication Resources.

- ☞ This policy permits the use of e-mail, voice mail, and truck mail to communicate concerning the business of employee organizations such as a teacher union, *except during a representation election campaign* to determine which union will represent a group of employees. It does provide that computer resources shall not be used to store records of such an organization.

- ☞ This document creates a presumption that a students parent/guardian agrees to a student having access to the Internet and other Electronic & Communication Resources. If the parent/guardian objects to this access, they must file a written objection annually.

- ☞ By using the Shoals Community Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources you, the user, agree to and will abide by the Shoals Community Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources Usage Policy.

Shoals Community School Corporation

Parent/Guardian Directive to Deny Student Access to Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources

Please print clearly & return to Principals Office or Teacher

Name of Student: _____

Grade: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I / We direct that the child named above not be permitted to access the following School Corporation electronic resources for the _____ school year.

- Internet
- E-mail
- Computer Access
- Other: _____

Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian

Date

Note:

You must return this form to your child's teacher by August 31st ONLY if you do NOT want access to certain electronic resources for your child. The restriction/s implemented by this form expires on July 1 of each school year and must be renewed for each subsequent school year.

Shoals Community School Corporation

Electronic & Communication Resources Staff Acknowledgment Form

Please print clearly & return to Principals Office

Name (Please Print)

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Shoals Community School Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources Usage Policy. I agree to and will abide by the policy. I understand if I violate the policy given, disciplinary action, including termination, will result in the violation of this policy.

Signature

Date

Shoals Community School Corporation

Electronic & Communication Resources Staff Acknowledgment Form

Please print clearly & return to Principals Office

Name (Please Print)

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Shoals Community School Corporation Electronic & Communication Resources Usage Policy. I agree to and will abide by the policy. I understand if I violate the policy given, disciplinary action, including termination, will result in the violation of this policy.

Signature

Date