Elmore County Public Schools
Responsible Use Guidelines for
Students

With the use of technology, Elmore County Public Schools (ECPS) is expanding learning access for students, staff, parents, and the entire Elmore County community. With this opportunity comes the obligation for appropriate and responsible use.

The Elmore County Public Schools district is pleased to be able to provide our students, staff, and guests with access to computer technology, including access to the Internet and a robust network. We strive to provide technology that enhances our abilities and connects us worldwide.

The operation of technology in the district relies heavily on the proper conduct of the users. Every ECPS user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our community. ECPS users must act responsibly, ethically, and legally, following the missions of their resources and the laws of Alabama and the United States.

Use of Personal Technology Devices as directed by the Alabama State Department of Education through the Focus Act:
- Beginning in 2025-2026, students cannot use wireless communication devices in public elementary or secondary schools during instructional hours.
  - Students must keep wireless communication devices turned off and stored in lockers, cars, or similar locations during school hours.
  - A student may use, operate, or possess a wireless communication device in a public-school building during the instructional day in any of the following circumstances:
    1) The use, operation, or possession is pursuant to the student's Individualized Education Program, Individualized Accommodation Plan, Section 504 plan, or Individualized Health Plan.
    2) For educational or learning purposes.
    3) An emergency.
  - District and Schools are not responsible for stolen or damaged personal technology devices.
  - District and Schools are not responsible for the maintenance or repair of any personal technology.
  - District and Schools are not responsible for any costs incurred due to the use of personal technology.

Adherence to the following is necessary for continued access to ALL technology resources while at school:

Users must respect and protect the privacy of others by:
- Using only assigned accounts/passwords and not sharing login/password information with others.
- Access passwords, data, or networks only if authorized.
- Do not share confidential details like names, birth dates, addresses, phone numbers, or Social Security Numbers.
- Adhering to the principles of digital citizenship ethical behavior is the norm. This includes avoiding actions that could be harmful to others or the learning environment.
- Users should employ technology resources in ways that are conducive to collaboration, learning,

and community building, ensuring that their actions reflect integrity and respect for the educational mission of ECPS on blogs, web forms, or other websites using the ECPS network.

Users must respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources by:
- Observing all district Internet filters and posted network security practices.
- Reporting security risks or violations to a teacher or administrator.
- Not accessing data, networks, hardware, software, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
- Not making any changes to settings in hardware, software, or the network.
- Not vandalizing data, networks, hardware, or other resources. Vandalism is any deliberate act to harm or destroy data, property, or networks.
- Conserving, protecting, and sharing these resources with other users.
- Notifying a staff member or administrator of computer or network malfunctions.
- Not installing software onto computers without appropriate approval.

Users must respect and protect the intellectual property of others by:
- Following copyright laws (not making illegal copies of music, games, or movies).
- Citing sources when using others' work (not plagiarizing).

Users must respect and practice the principles of the community by:
- Communicating only in ways that are kind and respectful.
- Reporting threatening or discomforting materials to a teacher or administrator.
- Not intentionally accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that violates the district's code of conduct (such as messages/content that is pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
- Respect the rights of others by refraining from cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation in messages, blogs, web content, social media, and other electronic mediums.
- Not intentionally accessing, transmitting, copying, or creating material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works) through messages, blogs, web content, social media, and other electronic mediums.
- Not using district resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the district's code of conduct.
- Avoiding spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
- Refraining from buying, selling, advertising, lobbying, or otherwise conducting business, unless approved as a school project.
- Only using the Internet and other electronic resources that are in support of education and with the educational goals, objectives, and policies of Elmore County Public Schools.

Users may, if in accordance with the above guidelines:
- Design and post web pages and other material from school resources. Students may have the opportunity to participate in electronic publishing. From time to time, your child's school or the district may wish to publish examples of student projects, quotes, photographs, student recognitions, and/or videos that include your child. Student work or images published on school web pages may include the student's name and the use of personal information will follow the guidelines set forth in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) section of the code of conduct. Any information about ECPS students or activities, even if hosted on outside servers, should follow ECPS web posting procedures. The district respects the rights of parents to restrict their children from publishing on the Internet and will secure parent permission for the current

school year. Parents must sign a form to deny permission for their child's work, pictures, and/or name to appear on the Internet/Intranet.

- Communicate electronically via tools such as email or document-sharing resources. All accounts with third-party providers will be used for school projects and to support the mastery of effective and proper communications. ECPS cannot and does not guarantee the security of electronic files located in external repositories. Despite content filters, the district cannot guarantee users will not encounter unsolicited information. Ensure student confidentiality when using third-party resources.

- Participate in videoconferencing activities including virtual field trip connections with entities such as zoos, museums, universities, and government agencies. Classes can connect with other classrooms locally or globally, through point-to-point or multi-point conferences.

- In distance learning/ACCESS Courses, the teacher and students' voices, presence, and participation transmit to other sites. Recording these events may occur at the discretion of the organizers.

Consequences for Violation

School computer systems are for use by authorized individuals only. Unauthorized access can result in legal consequences. Use of any other network or computing resources must be consistent with the rules appropriate to that network. The use of personal hotspots, Wi-Fi devices, or VPNs to access content while at school is prohibited.

Use of the district network is not a right, but a privilege, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of that privilege, disciplinary action, and/or prosecution. Prior to participation, a potential network user will receive information pertaining to the proper use of the network and sign a user agreement. School and district administrators will decide what constitutes inappropriate use of the network and their decision is final. The Elmore County Public Schools' Student Handbook and Code of Conduct along with state and federal laws will determine the consequences of the violations.

Supervision and Monitoring
- Information networks are "public places," and user actions are visible to others on the network. Elmore County Public Schools can monitor network usage to keep it working well for everyone.
- Anyone using electronic networks expressly consents to such monitoring.
- Administrators automatically receive monthly Internet usage reports.
- Prosecution and/or termination of user privileges will occur without warning.
- As required by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), ECPS Internet access shall have a filtering device or software that blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or to any material deemed harmful to minors as defined by CIPA and as determined by the Superintendent or designee. In the classroom, teachers will direct and monitor students' Internet use, but it is not possible to control all content on the global network, so students may encounter inappropriate information.
- Despite filtering, the school district cannot completely prevent access to material that does not align with its educational mission and policies.

Warranties
- Elmore County Public Schools and joint providers of the network make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services provided.

- ECPS will not be responsible for any damage suffered while using the system. These damages include loss of data, delays, non-deliveries, service interruptions caused by the system, or service interruptions caused by user errors or omissions.
- The district specifically denies responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through Internet connections.
- The Board owns its technological resources, but user-generated data, such as email content and digital images, represents the author's individual perspective and not that of the school or school system.
- Students and their parents must be aware that Elmore County Public Schools cannot assume any liability arising out of the illegal or inappropriate use of technology resources.

Accessing the District WiFi Network
The district believes technology is a powerful tool that enhances learning and enables students to access a vast amount of academic information. The district seeks to improve student access to digital resources and provide technology-based information as readily as traditional pen and paper.

Students should adhere to these guidelines when accessing the district Wi-Fi network:
- The district is not responsible for any content accessed by users who bypass the district Internet filter by connecting to the Internet via their personal cellular network (i.e., Mobile networks or personal VPNs instead of using the district Wi-Fi).
- Users are responsible for backing up their personal data and other important files regularly.
- Those who use district-owned and maintained technologies to access the Internet at home are responsible for the set-up and cost of home Internet service.

Expectations for Use of District-Issued Technology Devices
Responsible use of district-issued technology devices is the same as the use of classroom and lab computers that belong to the school--it is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. Users should follow network etiquette rules. General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable board policies, the Student Handbook & Code of Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to the use of the Internet and other school technological resources.

Students who are issued district-owned and maintained devices will sign a contract agreeing to district guidelines.

School district technology users must respect property and use equipment responsibly. Users are to follow all instructions regarding maintenance or care of the equipment. Users are accountable for any loss or damage to devices while they are in their possession. The school district is responsible for any routine maintenance or standard repairs to school system devices.

We _____ and _____
            (Printed parent name)   (printed student name)

have read the Responsible Use Guidelines, understand it, and agree to adhere to the principles and procedures detailed within. We understand and accept the conditions stated in the Responsible Use Guidelines and agree to hold blameless and release from any liability Elmore County Public Schools, the sponsoring school, its subcontractors, and employees. We understand that the Responsible Use Guidelines may be revised by the district to respond to the changing environment of web-based computer technology; we agree to any revised conditions of the RUG as updated on the district website. (http://bit.ly/ECPSrug)

Network users should follow the Responsible Use Guidelines as described in the district's code of conduct. Students who violate the Responsible Use Guidelines may lose network access and face disciplinary actions according to the Student Handbook & Code of Conduct.

We also understand that displaying work on the Internet makes the work available for viewing by any person around the world that has Internet access.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's signature: _____ School: _____

NOTE: Lack of response will imply permission. You must specifically contact your student's school to deny any access.