

Slide 1



Hello. This is Harvey Barnett. Welcome to this presentation about Acceptable Use Policies—or AUPs, as they are typically called. You know that technology has the potential to improve student learning dramatically when essential conditions are met. The use of technology carries with it responsibilities. One of these is ethical use. In this presentation you will learn about what constitutes an appropriate AUP and what you, as a leader, must do to make sure that your school or district has one in place. Implementing and enforcing your AUP will ensure that all users know the “rules of the road” and practice safe computing.

Slide 2



Why do you need an AUP? One of the joys and dilemmas with providing Internet access to students and staff is that they have access to E-mail and millions of web sites that contain millions of pages of unfiltered information. This raises the issue of access to inappropriate material. Pornography, hate literature, and directions for bomb-making are just three examples.


Your AUP serves to inform users what the district defines as appropriate and inappropriate use. It is a contract. By signing it, a user acknowledges that they understand and will practice the “rules of the road”.

If you have received E-rate funds, you will need to develop two AUPs: one for minors under 18 and one for adults.

Slide 3

**CIPA Requirements**

- Minors' access
- Safety and security of minors
- Unauthorized access



The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires specific steps to protect minors when using the Internet. Schools and libraries that receive E-rate funding are required to address the following in their AUP:

Controlling Access - how will you control when and how minors access the Internet and the World Wide Web?


Safety and security - how minors will be safe when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of electronic communication.

Unauthorized access - How minors will be prevented from unauthorized access including hacking and other unlawful activities while online.

Slide 4

**CIPA Requirements**

- Preventing unauthorized disclosure
- Restricting minors' access to harmful materials
- Public notice



Unauthorized disclosure - How minors will be prevented from disseminating or using personal identification information.

Restricting access - What measures you have in place to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

CIPA also includes a requirement for public notice and a hearing or meeting on the provisions of the AUP.

Slide 5

**Acceptable Use Policies**

Essential elements:

1. Purpose
2. Terms and conditions
3. Privileges of use and misuse
4. Agreements and consents




An Acceptable Use Policy that includes the CIPA requirements has the following four essential elements:

- A Purpose statement
- Terms and conditions
- Privileges of use
- Agreements and consents

Slide 6

**Purpose of the AUP**

- Define limits
- Educational use
- More than computers



The purpose section of the AUP describes why you are providing Internet access and complying with CIPA requirements. In order to enforce your AUP it is necessary that your users understand the limits you have set for the use of your district's Internet services.


Many AUPs include a definition of what is meant by the "use of telecommunication services for educational purposes" Developing this definition is necessary; otherwise, students and employees are free to use district E-mail or web space for political lobbying, union business, or personal business. Defining your limits also helps you to avoid the legal issues of freedom of speech by having students and staff acknowledge formally the conditions by which you are granting them access.

Do not limit your definitions to computers alone. Include provisions for any wireless devices such as cell phones and PDAs.

## Slide 7

### Terms and Conditions

- Defines what is acceptable, what is not.
- May define etiquette, spamming, sexism, etc.
- Strive a balance



The AUP needs to define the terms and conditions of use so that users understand what is acceptable use and what is not. This is the section in which you describe how you are meeting the five requirements of CIPA.

AUPs often include definitions for network etiquette, use of inappropriate language, plagiarism, copyright, spamming, inappropriate access to material, racism, sexism, and privacy issues.


Anything not generally defined will be considered by the users as acceptable use.

The trick here is to develop terms and conditions that strike a balance between a policy that is so restrictive it inhibits appropriate use and one that is so lenient that almost anything goes.

## Slide 8

### Privileges of Use

- Privilege not a right
- Disciplinary rules
- Make punishment commensurate with the infraction.
- Follow your overall discipline policy.



Like driving on the public roads, access to the district's telecommunication services is a privilege, not a right. In order to enforce the AUP, it's important to spell out what disciplinary measures you will take when it is violated.

As a rule of thumb, punishment needs to be commensurate with the "crime". As an example, a student caught sending an inappropriate but harmless joke should not lose Internet access privileges for an entire school year!

Remember that students don't leave their rights at the school door.

Handle infractions of your AUP consistently with your school's overall discipline policy.

## Slide 9

### Agreements and Consents

- Get signatures.
- Teach the policy.
- Parents must sign for minors.
- Provide parents with resources  
e.g. SafeKids.com



From a legal point of view, your AUP is not enforceable until it is signed. A signature indicates that the contract has been read and understood.

So that students and staff fully understand their responsibilities, it is important that the teacher or trainer teach each section of the AUP. To ensure that each section has been read and understood, many AUPs require a signature at the end of each major section rather than only one at the end of the entire document.


Parents must sign for all students under 18 indicating they accept responsibility for their child's use. Some high schools choose to have all AUPs signed by the parent, even when the student is legally an adult. Signing the AUP signifies that the user agrees to abide by the rules and understands the consequences of inappropriate use.

A nice thing to do when you ask parents to sign is to send along an article about child safety on the Internet and what parents can do at home to promote acceptable use.

## Slide 10

### Enforcing the AUP

- Adult supervision.
- Consistent and fair enforcement.
- Check with your district's attorney.

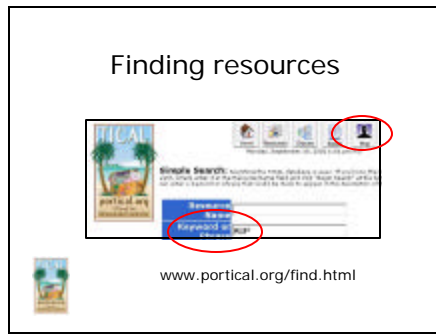


You have your policy in place. Now that you have taught its provisions and the users have signed it, you need to ensure that users adhere to its spirit. For students, it helps if they only have access when an adult is present. Students should also be encouraged to report inadvertent access to inappropriate material. A regular review of the Internet access logs on your server can identify inappropriate use so that action can be taken.

As with any other school rule, consistent enforcement is critical.

When students and staff understand that inappropriate use will result in a disciplinary action, less inappropriate use takes place. A word of caution, however: before adopting any policy, have it reviewed by your district's attorney to make sure that it is in compliance with appropriate laws and legal rulings.

Slide 11



I hope you've found this brief overview of Acceptable Use Policies helpful and that you'll want to share the information with others. The Portical resource database includes links to additional resources to help you develop or refine your AUP. Just go to the FIND page and enter AUP in the keyword box. Finally, return often to Portical. In the upcoming months, you'll find a growing collection of presentations like this and other resources on a variety of topics to assist you in your technology leadership role. For now, this is Harvey Barnett saying, "Good by until next time."