

Now more than ever, it is important to have a well-worded and definitive Acceptable Use Policy for students and staff. Due to the changes in technology, social media, and personal devices, it is important to have something that defines the use of any technology on campus so that you have something to fall back upon when individuals question policy and use in times of discipline or conflict.

A few of the best practices I have seen are the following:

1. Require signatures from Parents and Students on the Student AUP so that all are knowledgeable of the policy to which they are being held accountable. Even if they have not chosen to read the content of the policy, this is their acknowledgement that they agree to what has been put in place.
2. Many schools are creating a separate AUP for all school staff which defines use of personal devices and social media (and much more!) so that they know what the expectations are for them as a worker in that specific ministry. The less wiggle room the better with this as this will forestall many issues with teacher technology use.
3. The original wave of AUPs put into place from schools are now outdated and need to be revised. Many of the best AUPs I have seen are updated yearly to include new changes and advances in technology, and it is built into their policy that a yearly review is required. One of the major changes which have been more clearly defined as of late are the AUP regulations on Social Media as this has become a flashpoint for issues concerning students, parents and staff. This, along with personal device clarifications are the two major points to include in any newly updated AUPs.

One final note is that the best place to look for great Acceptable Use Policies is your local public school system. Their policies are often extremely detailed as they will have had to deal with additional issues which you might not have had to face before. Additionally, they often have positions specifically dedicated to updating these policies, and as such they are well developed.

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