

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Implementing SOPPA

Unofficial answers from the Learning Technology Center to common SOPPA questions.

GENERAL

Who must comply with SOPPA?

Websites, online services, and mobile apps that are designed, marketed, and used for K-12 school purposes must comply with SOPPA regardless of whether they have a contract with a school or district.

What does it mean to be SOPPA-compliant?

If a vendor states that they are SOPPA-compliant, that means that they are:

- Not using collected data to provide targeted ads;
- Not profiling students except in furtherance of school purposes;
- Not selling or renting student information;
- Not disclosing information unless required to by law or as part of the maintenance and development of its service;
- Using sound security practices;
- Deleting student data when requested by the school or district;
- Publicly disclosing information about its use, terms of service, agreement, and privacy policy;
- Entered into a written agreement with the school district.

PRIVACY AGREEMENTS

Is there a standard privacy agreement that schools should use?

School districts are allowed to create their own privacy agreements with vendors. To streamline the process, the LTC recommends using the National Data Privacy Agreement, IL Version (NDPA-IL). The NDPA-IL uses an agreement developed by multiple states to address legislation similar to Illinois' SOPPA laws.

If we use the NDPA-IL, can we change it?

The majority of the NDPA should not be customized. The NDPA-IL is written to allow one district to sign an agreement with a vendor, and then other districts can easily "piggy-back" on the original agreement. If the NDPA-IL is "red-lined," or changed to fit the district's preferences, then it's less likely other districts will use it. However, districts can update Exhibit __ when they have unique requirements.

Is the NDPA used in other states?

Vendors with a national footprint are increasingly familiar with state-mandated policy legislation. In fact, many other states like California have successfully used agreements like the NDPA with vendors.

VENDORS

Does SOPPA apply to all vendors, including Google, Microsoft, Apple, and SIS platforms?

Yes, all vendors that operate in Illinois must adhere to SOPPA requirements.

What are companies doing to show they are SOPPA compliant?

While some vendors are proactively learning about SOPPA and are open to signing agreements, most not advertising their compliance yet.

MANAGEMENT

Are there resources available to help districts manage the additional workload and workflow?

Yes, several tools exist to help districts manage the required privacy agreements and sharing requirements. The LTC provides free access to the [Student Data Privacy Consortium's database](#), offers negotiated pricing for Learn Platform and CatchOn via our free [LTTP Cooperative](#), and can also provide other suggestions upon request.

Does the LTC recommend specific tools?

While the LTC does not endorse specific tools, we can recommend management tools based on the needs of the district.

POLICIES

What are the recommended policy and procedural changes?

The Illinois State Board of Education will provide recommended policies by the end of the fiscal year. Districts with [PRESS subscriptions](#) can also find

recommended PRESS policies and procedures in the latest update.

TEACHERS

How does SOPPA impact teachers?

Teachers must follow district-created policies for vetting 3rd party applications that utilize personally identifiable information.

What does personally identifiable student information mean?

This information includes any identifying information including, but not limited to, name (first and/or last), initials, student ID, kid-code number, email address, home address, telephone number, student identifiers, discipline records, test results, special education data, juvenile dependency records, grades, evaluations, criminal records, medical records, health records, Social Security number, biometric information, disabilities, socioeconomic information, food purchases, political affiliations, religious information, text messages, documents, search activity, photos, voice recordings, or geolocation information.

What should teachers communicate with parents/caregivers?

SOPPA ensures student data is secure so that students can focus on learning.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGY CENTER of ILLINOIS

The Learning Technology Center is a statewide program that supports all public K-12 districts, schools, and educators through technology initiatives, services, and professional learning opportunities.

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