

Instructions for implementing Monitoring and Community using ePALS

Student Safety and Monitoring

As an e-mail service, ePALS SchoolMail can alleviate some of the common concerns that arise from the implementation of student e-mail. Measures to this end include built-in e-mail monitoring (with a key word filter and human preview), e-mail access control and e-mail attachment monitoring. With younger students in particular, it lets you bring e-mail technology into the classroom while maximizing the likelihood that students will use it in appropriate, education-specific ways. Monitored e-mail means that students' incoming and outgoing e-mail messages may be previewed by a designated monitor, i.e., the school's sub-administrator, before reaching their intended recipients. In this way, the monitor can ensure that the message is appropriate to age, setting and context.

****Getting Started****

1. To set default student safety settings, log into your sub-administration account and select the SETTINGS link or select the SYSTEM tab and then SETTINGS.
2. Enable the "Email Filter Languages" filters by clicking on the boxes on the left-hand side and then selecting Yes or No.
3. Check the left-hand box next to "Access Level" and select from the dropdown menu. The access level determines to where students can send e-mail and from where they can receive e-mail. Student access levels are restricted to one the following six options:
 - a. Class/Monitor – Do not use. This option is only available if there is a monitor for every classroom.
 - b. School - Students are limited to e-mailing students and teachers with ePALS SchoolMail accounts in the same school. Choose this access level if you want students to use e-mail only for school-based projects and communication.
 - c. District - This option limits students to e-mailing students and teachers with ePALS SchoolMail accounts at their school and other LAUSD locations. Choose this access level if you want students to use e-mail only for District and school-based projects and communication.
 - d. ePALS SchoolMail™ - This option limits students to e-mailing anyone in their school or District who is using ePALS SchoolMail as well as other schools outside your District using the ePALS SchoolMail system. Choose this access level if you want students to use e-mail only for communication and projects with other schools outside your District using the ePALS SchoolMail system.
 - e. ePALS Classroom Exchange - This option allows students to e-mail ePALS partner classrooms as delegated by their teachers. As well, students can send e-mails to any address that contains epals.com as part of the domain (i.e. smithj@epals.com, janes@jbs.epals.com). This includes anyone at your school and other schools using ePALS SchoolMail, as well as community members of ePALS.com. Choose this access level if you want students to use e-mail to communicate and collaborate with each other and with classroom members of ePALS Classroom Exchange.
 - f. Internet - This option allows your students to e-mail anyone with an e-mail address, whether they are inside your district, part of ePALS or using the Internet through other means. Choose this access level to allow students to e-mail anyone, anywhere.
4. Select the desired "Filter Level" from the drop down menu.
 - a. Level 1: At this level, **every message a student sends or receives requires a monitor's approval prior to delivery**. If a word in the Flagged Word list is found in a message, the Flagged Word icon will be displayed to indicate that there might be inappropriate language. The word will also be highlighted in the message.
 - b. Level 2: The designated monitor **will receive a copy of every incoming and outgoing message but only messages containing inappropriate language will**

require a monitor's approval on this level of monitoring. If *Flagged Word* is detected in a message, the *Flagged Word* flashing icon will be displayed next to the message. The message will first require a monitor's approval before it reaches its destination. The monitor can choose to hold, delete, forward or respond to the message. Otherwise, messages will be delivered normally with a copy retained by the designated monitor.

- c. **Level 3: The monitor will receive a copy of the questionable message only if an inappropriate word is detected in the e-mail address, subject or body of the message.** The message will not be allowed to proceed to its final destination until the monitor has been able to review the content. The monitor can choose to approve, hold, delete, forward or respond to the message, depending on whether the sender was a student, the nature of the content or the potential destination. In the case where a student has tried to send an inappropriate message, the designated monitor may choose to discuss appropriate e-mail use with the student or forward to appropriate contacts for disciplinary action if necessary. The type of action taken will depend on the District's terms as identified within the Acceptable Use Policy. If a flagged message is intended for a student, we do not recommend responding to the message.
 - d. **Level 4: All filtering is off** (default). Students will not have their incoming and outgoing e-mail messages scanned for words from the Flagged Words list.
5. Next, check the box to the left of "Flag Attachments" to determine attachment monitoring. This option determines if incoming and outgoing e-mails that contain attachments should be previewed and approved first before reaching the intended recipient or not. Select Yes or No for attachment monitoring.
 6. Scroll to the bottom of the page to **APPLY** your changes. Failure to apply the changes will not be recorded. **Note:** These default settings will be applied to any new student accounts. Follow the steps below to change existing student accounts.
 - a. Log into your sub-administration account and from the home page, and select STUDENTS under USER ADMINISTRATION.
 - b. Your location should be selected and all student accounts are listed. You can perform the updates based on grade levels if the grade level students are being attached to the same monitor account. Otherwise, if all students are being attached to one monitor, no grade needs to be selected in the drop down menu.
 - c. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on SELECT ALL.
 - d. Each student should have a check next to their names in the check box.
 - e. Next select PROPERTIES.
 - f. The screen will enable you to change the grade, monitor and monitoring settings.
 - g. Update the desired settings by using the drop down menus based upon the descriptions in steps 2 through 5 (above).
 - h. Click APPLY.

ePALS Community

The User Profile System and Search Community Tool in ePALS SchoolMail features a unique profile system that enables teachers to describe themselves and their classes and have that description stored in a database. Teachers can then access this database of “profiles” to search for and contact profile creators locally and/or globally using the Search Community feature. The search tool presents a powerful means to take learning beyond the classroom through the use of e-mail. E-mail is easily integrated into any subject area or curricular learning activity requiring a communication or collaborative element. Connecting with another classroom in your district, city, state, country or elsewhere in the world, opens up new and exciting learning opportunities. Classroom exchanges can be used to extend or even supplement existing teaching and learning practices that support the California State Learning Standards.

Your profile is your introduction to other ePALS SchoolMail members at LAUSD along with worldwide ePALS classroom members. Only teachers can create and contact classroom profiles. Profiles can be kept completely private, or access can be restricted to users within the school, the District or available to the ePALS.com community. LAUSD will permit all profiles to be shared with the ePALS.com community. The ePALS.com global community provides teachers with a unique opportunity to connect their students with other classrooms and engage in worldwide collaborative learning opportunities that support student letter writing, literacy, cross-cultural and project sharing activities. ePALS supports over 90,000 classroom profiles and reaches over 4 million educators and students worldwide in 191 countries. In order to connect with the local LAUSD community or the ePALS international classroom community, you will first need to create or update your profile. Having an accurate and up-to-date profile enables other members to contact you or for you to contact them to initiate and manage classroom partnering and learning activities. It is just as important to update your private profile to enable administrators to broadcast e-mail messages to you.

The search community tool makes it easy to find any class you are looking for whether locally or abroad. You can search based on location, keyword, ages, grades, languages and more. With this real world classroom connection, students are inspired to practice and apply their literacy skills through letter writing/reading with classmates and peers next door or around the world in a multilingual environment. To view examples of the type of Shared Profiles available through our global database, ePALS.com, select the “Search Community” link in the left hand navigation bar to view profile examples from around the world.

****Getting Started****

1. Creating a profile.
 - a. First log in to your ePALS SchoolMail account and select MY ACCOUNT in the left-hand navigation bar on the Home page.
 - b. Review your personal information, and make any necessary changes.
 - c. Select SHARED from the profile link on the right hand side.
 - d. Fill in the blank spaces. Your profile name is usually the school you are associated with. Next, determine who should see your profile. You have some options. If you are interested in the global ePALS community for global learning opportunities, select the ePALS Global Community from the dropdown menu. This ensures that other teachers can contact you for partnering activities both within your district and from around the world. If you select your own district, your public profile will not be viewable to anyone outside your district.
 - e. Enter a classroom description in the textbox area. Be sure to provide an accurate description of your teaching objectives. Describe projects of interest, noting the age range of your students, what kind of classroom partners you are looking for and the desired frequency of the activity. For example, include any relevant information

- pertaining to desired geographic location, age, topic/project, frequency, etc. Use key words to refer to e-mail, pen pals, China, science project, ESL, letter writing, etc.
- f. Be sure to APPLY the changes. If you fail to apply the changes, your profile will not be updated.
 - g. The next step is to find a partner classroom!
 - h. **Note:** Update your profile whenever your classroom objectives change. This helps to keep your profile at the top of the search list and indicates your eagerness to participate. ePALS will verify any new profiles and updates. Allow 24-48 hours for the changes to appear in the database.
2. Finding Partner Classrooms
- a. Login into your ePALS SchoolMail account and select the SEARCH COMMUNITY link in the left hand navigation bar to begin the search for a partner classroom through our global database. Note in the top navigation bar, the following links, NEW PROFILES, POWER SEARCH and MAP.
 - b. Search Criteria
 - i. You can first choose to search the most recent profiles or perform a power search or even use the MAP on the top navigation bar. The NEW PROFILES link, will list the most recently added or updated profiles from global community members. We recommend contacting recently updated profiles as these classrooms are eager to begin or renew classroom exchanges. The MAP search is also an effective way to quickly locate a partner classroom. Select the country by clicking on the map. The search results will list the classrooms registered from this particular country.
 - ii. Otherwise you may choose to use the online search form located on this page. You may for example, enter the desired city, country, language and age range. ePALS does not recommend selecting a specific category. Most of the ePALS SchoolMail profiles are by default, K-12. You can skip the category area.
 - iii. If you are seeking global ePALS partners, be sure to select ePALS Global Community in the dropdown menu at the bottom of the search page where it states, "Search based on...". This will provide global classroom profiles. The default search is set to the LAUSD District. Only use this option to search within the Los Angeles Unified School District for other classrooms locally.
 - iv. To locate a classroom in the LASUD community, LAUSD teachers will need to have already completed and updated a profile. To locate a classroom within LAUSD, select "LAUSD District" in the dropdown menu at the bottom of the page rather than ePALS Global Community.
 - c. Select **SEARCH**.
 - i. A list of classrooms matching your criteria will appear with the most recently added profiles at the top of the page. The most recently added or updated profile, the better your chances of making a connection.
 - ii. Once a profile has been selected, you will initiate contact through e-mail by clicking on "**Contact**" beside the chosen classroom profile. The contact's e-mail address remains hidden. If the profile creator (teacher) chooses to respond, you will then learn the e-mail address.
 - d. Compose your e-mail to this teacher. In your e-mail be sure ask about availability for an ePALS Exchange. You might wish to identify your location, the type of student-based activity, the number of students and sharing a little bit about your students.
 - e. Send your message. Be sure to check your e-mail Inbox routinely/daily for a response.
 - f. Once you've secured mutual consent, you and your colleague will work together to determine how you will manage this exchange to achieve your instructional objectives and ensure success. During this initial planning phase, be sure to discuss in your e-mail correspondence, mutual expectations, desired frequency of the exchange and expected outcomes. Once you've agreed on the framework for the exchange, the next step is to swap e-mail addresses. Students may then be matched

up for a “pen pal” exchange. If the number of students does not match, consider doubling up students or having students work in groups to develop their stories, letters, responses, questions, etc...

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