

## **Instruction**

### **Internet Acceptable Use: Filtering**

The New London Public Schools is fortunate to have access to the Internet at all schools. This access provides increased opportunities for students and staff to conduct research and to communicate locally, nationally, and internationally.

This wonderful resource also provides access to material unsuitable for students and which has no educational value. It is the responsibility of all District staff to ensure that the Internet, as used in District Schools, is appropriately guided and monitored. Moreover, staff also has the responsibility to conduct themselves in an appropriate private manner when using the Internet.

The Board of Education provides computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks for students and staff to carry out the mission of the Board in an environment which ensures access to up-to-date information, management, and communication services. Responsible use of these systems and networks is expected of all students and staff.

The computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks are the property of the Board of Education and are to be used only for those activities directly related to teaching, learning, and/or management by students and staff. The equipment, infrastructure, and software are not to be used for personal gain by any student or staff member.

In order to ensure that the District's Internet connection is used in the appropriate manner and that all users are protected from any inappropriate information published on the Internet, the District has and is continuing to implement the following:

1. Professional development opportunities to help teachers integrate the use of the Internet into classroom teaching.
2. Use of the computers, computer systems, software electronic access privileges and networks shall be restricted to those users who have signed the District's "Acceptable Use Policy." In the case of minors, the "Acceptable Use Policy" must also be signed by the student's parent or guardian.
3. Implementation of a system developed to filter out Internet sites with content considered unacceptable for student viewing. A committee of teachers, parents, and administrators shall be used to receive appeals from users who have a specific use in mind for a filtered site.

The Internet changes rapidly making it impossible to filter all objectionable sites. Therefore, the staff role in supervising and monitoring student access to the Internet is critical. In addition, each individual has the responsibility to monitor their own navigation on the Internet to avoid undesirable sites.

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### Internet Acceptable Use: Filtering (Cont.)

Filtering should only be viewed as one of a number of techniques used to manage student's access to the Internet and encourage acceptable usage. It should not be viewed as a foolproof approach to preventing access to inappropriate material. Filtering should be used in conjunction with:

- Educating students to be "Net-smart"
- Using recognized Internet gateways as a searching tool and/or homepage for students, in order to facilitate access to appropriate material;
- Using "Acceptable Use Agreements;"
- Using behavior management practices for which Internet access privileges can be earned or lost; and
- Appropriate supervision, either in person and/or electronically.

The placement of filters on District computers/computer systems is viewed as an exercise of the Board's ability to determine educational suitability of all material used in the schools.

Filters may be utilized with District schools to (1) block pre-selected sites, (2) block by word, (3) block entire categories like chat and newsgroups, and (4) through a pre-selected list of approved sites.

The Superintendent of Schools is directed to establish guidelines and procedures for responsible use of computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks provided by the Board of Education.

The District recognizes its responsibility to educate students regarding appropriate behavior on social networking and chat room sites about cyberbullying. Therefore, students shall be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

### Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[1-213](#) Access to public records. Exempt records.

[10-15b](#) Access of parent or guardians to student's records.

[10-209](#) Records not to be public.

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**Legal Reference (cont.):**

[11](#)-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents

[11](#)-8b Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations.

[46b](#)-56 (e) Access to Records of Minors.

Connecticut Public Records Administration Schedule V - Disposition of Education Records (Revised 1983).

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of PL 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.).

Dept. of Education. 34 CFR. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)-parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.

HR 4577, Fiscal 2001 Appropriations Law ( contains Children's Internet Protection Act)

Public Law 94-553, The Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. seq.

Public Law 110-385 Broadband Data Improvement Act/Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act

*Reno v. ACLU*, 521 U.S. 844 (1997)

*Ginsberg v. New York*, 390 U.S. 629, at 642, n.10 (1968)

*Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 868 (1988)

*Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 620, 267 (1988)

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