

# POLICY

## READINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

### 2240 CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The Board of Education believes that the consideration of controversial issues has a legitimate place in the instructional program of the schools. Properly introduced and conducted, the consideration of such issues can help pupils learn to identify important issues, explore fully and fairly all sides of an issue, weigh carefully the values and factors involved, and develop techniques for formulating and evaluating positions.

The Board will permit the introduction and proper educational use of controversial issues provided that their use in the instructional program is related to the instructional goals of the course of study and level of maturity of the pupils. The discussion of controversial issues must not tend to indoctrinate pupils or persuade them to a particular point of view. Instead, teachers must encourage fair presentation and open-mindedness and the free exchange of ideas in a spirit of scholarly inquiry, drawing upon information and insights from the widest feasible range of resources. **Teachers shall present this information in a manner that allows pupils to:**

- **Find, collect, and assemble factual materials on the subject;**
- **Interpret the data without prejudice;**
- **Reconsider assumptions and claims;**
- **Reach their own conclusions.**

When the consideration of controversial issues have not been specified in the course guide, **and have arisen unexpectedly**, the Board will permit the instructional use of only those issues **so long as the teacher has provided relevant information on both sides of the question. For controversial issues that have not been specified in the course guide but are planned, the Board will permit the instructional use of those issues** that have been approved in advance by the Principal.

The discussion of controversial issues in the classroom will be conducted in an unprejudiced and dispassionate manner and cannot be allowed to disrupt the educational process. In the discussion of any issue, a teacher may express a personal opinion, provided the expression is characterized as personal opinion and does not attempt to persuade pupils to the teacher's point of view. **Students shall be taught to recognize each other's right to form an opinion on controversial issues, and shall be assured of their own right to do so without jeopardizing their relationship with the teacher or the school.**



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The Superintendent shall assist teaching staff members in developing a sensitivity to the occurrence of controversial issues in the context of the curriculum and developing techniques for the management of controversial issues that do not stifle a spirit of free inquiry.

**In determining speakers to be invited for a class or school wide program who may be controversial, the teacher must give consideration to:**

- **The nature of the program whether the presentation and speaker will serve a legitimate educational purpose;**
- **The necessity of the presentation and speaker to the instructional program; and**
- **The topic and its sensitivity or know community or school perspectives whether the presentation and speaker will be appropriate for the age and maturity of the students.**

**Consideration of the above criteria shall not automatically mean that a speaker must be excluded. Additionally, the teacher must prepare students with adequate context, including differing perspectives, prior to the presentation.**

**All requests for class and school wide speakers from outside the district must be made in writing to the Principal, and shall be submitted at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of the speaker's presentation. The written request shall articulate responses to the bullet points noted herein. All class speakers, from outside the district, must receive the prior written approval of the Principal, and all school wide speakers, from outside the district, must receive the prior written approval of the Superintendent.**

Adopted: 24 January 2006  
Revised: 9 December 2025



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CLASS SIZE

### 2312 CLASS SIZE

The Board of Education directs that the number of pupils assigned to any one class be governed by considerations of instructional quality and economy of operation. Whenever possible, class sizes at the K-3 level shall be at the lower end of the desired range. **Preschool class sizes shall be at a range dictated by the New Jersey Department of Education.**

Basic considerations for the formation of classes are:

- a. The grade level;
- b. The educational needs of each student in each class;
- c. The total number of students in the grade;
- d. The availability of classroom space and other areas for instruction;
- e. The number of staff available;
- f. The number of mainstreamed special education students; and
- g. Other relevant factors.

Maximum limits shall take into account the subject matter, type of instruction, ability of pupils, availability of aides, and use of special facilities and equipment and may be waived with board approval to accommodate the demands of a temporary increase in enrollment.

The Board of Education recognizes the unique environment of a kindergarten classroom and directs that special consideration be given to the addition of instructional support in the kindergarten classes.

Where the number of pupils assigned to a non-exempt class exceeds the maximum number, the following actions may taken:

- a. Consideration may be given to assigning instructional support to assist the teacher;
- b. Classes may be organized into team teaching components;
- c. The principal may consider reorganizing the overcrowded grade level or subject area into a greater number of classes, with approval by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall inform the Board when the number of pupils in any class in grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> exceeds the maximum number of pupils. In addition, a report of class sizes shall be provided to the Board at the end of the first semester.

Adopted: 24 January 2006

Revised: 21 July 2015, **9 December 2025**



## 2360 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Board of Education recognizes that the use of technology in the educational process is essential as part of the schooling experience. Technology is to be viewed as a tool to enhance the learning process among other tools that are required for teachers and pupils to fully explore the curriculum. In addition, technology can be used to enhance the administration of the schools and the district. In order to provide direction and meaning to the use of technology as an instructional tool, the Board directs that the Superintendent and the teaching and support staff use technology as a regular part of the learning process in every area of the curricular area.

For purposes of this policy "technology" means the use of computers and computer peripherals, communications networks, access to databases and libraries of information, **software programs, webpages**, and the integration of audio, video, multimedia devices and media for purposes of teaching and learning.

The Superintendent in consultation with the **Technology Coordinator** and the teaching and support staff shall recommend **quarterly to the Ed/Tech Committee** of Board the acquisition of appropriate technology to best implement the curricular, instructional and administrative program of the school district. The Superintendent shall prepare a technology plan for the school district to encompass the following:

### Curricular, Instructional and Administrative Need

The technology plan shall define the curricular, instructional and administrative need for technological equipment and media for each area of instruction and shall project the need to the extent possible for a five-year period.

### ~~In-Service~~ Staff Development

The Board shall provide opportunities to participate in in-service programs for employees on all hardware or software programs to be used in the execution of educational and administrative tasks. In-service programs may be provided on or off site. The cost of tuition for in-service programs may be reimbursed by the Board.

### Standards, Codes and References

All technology installations shall conform to the following standards, codes and references N.J.S.A. 18A, N.J.A.C. 5:23 and 6:22, BOCA National Building Code, NEMA, EIA/TIA 568 and 569 (Electronics Industry Association/Telecommunications Industry Association), LPC NFPA 78 (Lighting Protection code) IEEE 802.3 - Ethernet



and 802.5 Token Ring (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers), UL (Underwriter's Laboratories), ANSI (American National Standards Institute) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).

## **Technology Hardware and Software Acquisitions**

**The District will provide support or maintenance agreements, where applicable, for all technology hardware. All district technology equipment purchases will receive prior approval from the Technology Coordinator and Superintendent. Considerations for approval will include need, fiscal prudence, and alignment with district technology hardware standards and compatibility. Donated technology hardware will not be accepted unless it meets minimum standards as specified by the Technology Coordinator.**

**The District shall acquire technology equipment through direct purchase and/or lease purchase. All computers shall be considered to have a useful life of five years. The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan for the continual replacement, upgrading, and maintenance of technology equipment.**

**All district technology software and peripheral purchases or acquisitions will receive prior approval from the Technology Coordinator, Curriculum Supervisors, and Superintendent. Considerations for approval will include need, fiscal prudence, compatibility, and alignment with district educational and management goals. The District will provide training and/or support for core district software deemed essential to implement the district's educational and management programs.**

**Personal technology hardware and software used in district facilities must not conflict with district technology hardware or software. The district is not responsible for the replacement or repair of personal technology hardware or software.**

## **Facilities Planning**

In all facilities projects involving new constructions, additions and renovations the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the plans include provisions for current and future technology needs in terms of the structural, electric/electronic, mechanical, acoustical and visual systems of the building(s). All educational specifications shall include under the description of instructional activities and implications for technology and under special features, those features required for the use of instructional technology.

## **Software Copyright**



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All employees shall strictly adhere to the copyright laws of the United States. No software shall be copied and/or distributed except in accordance with these laws.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan for the continual replacement and upgrading of equipment.

### Computer Laboratories and Distributed Computing

In order to provide teacher, staff and pupil access to computers the Board directs that provisions be made as follows:

#### Computer Laboratories

The Board may, **but is not required to**, provide computer laboratories where clusters of computers and computer peripherals are available. When computer laboratories are provided, they shall be accessible to all teachers and pupils who have a defined educational need for computing facilities.

#### Audio/Video

All audio and/or video materials shall be used in accordance with the copyright laws of the United States. Teachers, pupils or staff who create audio or video materials containing the voices or images of the individuals involved shall obtain proper releases from those individuals, their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or instructional use within the school.

#### Instructional Media Center/Library

The ~~Instructional Media Center/Library~~ **Library/Media Center** shall be the division of each school responsible for coordinating the distribution and use of educational technology throughout the school. The Center shall contain the electronic media distribution system and shall make the system available throughout the school system.

To the extent possible, the ~~IMC/Library~~ **Library/Media Center** shall acquire data and publications electronically to facilitate distribution and use. Teachers, pupils and staff shall be given the opportunity to indicate data and publication needs. All items available through the ~~IMC/Library~~ **Library/Media Center** shall be cataloged electronically and are to be available through the school's computer network. To avoid duplication, all media and software purchases shall be coordinated through the



IMC/Library ~~Library~~ **Library/Media Center** and approved by the Coordinator of Technology and the school Principal. In determining approval, the following factors shall be taken into account:

1. The title of the material;
2. Any recognized rating of the material (e.g. motion picture industry rating);
3. The relevance to the curriculum;
4. The cost of the media or software;
5. The viability of the company producing the software.

## Broadcast Rights and Copyrights

The Board specifically retains the Broadcast rights and copyrights to all materials created by employees of the Board as part of their responsibilities to the Board. Any financial remuneration for the use of such materials shall be retained by the Board and specifically dedicated to enhance technology used as part of the educational program.

## Computer Security

The Superintendent shall develop security procedures to include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

### 1. Physical Security of Equipment

All computer equipment shall be maintained in a secure manner appropriate to its location.

### 2. Data Security

- a. Back-up procedures for system files, libraries, and data shall be practiced in a timely fashion.
- b. Disaster recovery plans shall be kept up-to-date at all times.
- c. Password protection, **including multi-factor authentication**, shall be in place and updated periodically.



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- d. Resource security shall be in place to prevent unauthorized access to the network, system files, libraries, and data.

3. Employee Training

All new employees having, as part of their job responsibilities, access to computers and information systems will be trained in the proper security procedures outlined above.

All employees having, as part of their job responsibilities, access to computers and information systems will be kept up-to-date on current security procedures for equipment and data.

4. Transaction Audit Trail

Appropriate procedures will be maintained in order to monitor system activity and users, as necessary.

5. Security Officer

The Superintendent shall designate a Computer Security Officer to monitor system security procedures.

### Use of Facsimile (FAX) Machines

Fax machines provide a useful means of communicating and shall be subject to the same rules that apply to the use of telephones. All incoming faxes shall be considered confidential mail. No disclosure of the contents of any fax shall be made except to the individual for whom the fax is intended. Any individual violating this confidentiality shall be subject to discipline as provided by the policies and regulations of the Board.

N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.2  
17 U.S.C. 101 et seq.

Adopted: 24 January 2006  
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REPORTING ACCIDENTS

### 8442 REPORTING ACCIDENTS

The Board of Education directs that all reasonable efforts be made to ensure a safe learning and working environment for the pupils and employees of this district. To that end and to the end that legitimate employee claims for worker's compensation be expedited, the Board requires that accidents be reported and evaluated. Any accident that results in an injury, however slight, to a pupil, an employee of the Board, or a visitor to the schools must be reported promptly to the district health office and the nurse will then write up a report on the incident. **The report shall include the date, time and place of the incident; the names of persons involved; the nature of the injury, to the extent that it is known; and a description of all relevant circumstances.** Injured persons shall be referred immediately to the school nurse for such medical attention as may be appropriate. **Standard operation procedures shall be developed for employees of the Board who may be eligible to receive worker's compensation benefits.**

~~The injured employee or visitor or the staff member responsible for an injured pupil shall complete a form, available in the health office, that includes the date, time and place of the incident; the names of persons involved; the nature of the injury, to the extent that it is known; and a description of all relevant circumstances.~~

Any employee of the Board who suffers a job-related injury must report the injury and its circumstances to the Building Principal or job supervisor, as appropriate, no later than twenty-four hours following the occurrence of the injury. The failure of an employee to comply with this mandate may result in disciplinary action.

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