

REGIONAL DISTRICT ELEVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

6141.321 (a)

INSTRUCTION

Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet

The Internet, a global electronic information infrastructure, is a network of networks used by educators, businesses, the government, and numerous organizations. The Board of Education believes that the Internet is a valuable tool that should be used in schools to educate and inform students, much like books magazines, video, CD-ROM and other informational sources. The Board endorses student use of the Internet for learning and research which enhances information available through other mediums. This includes participation in distance learning activities, asking questions of and consulting experts, communicating with other students and individuals, and locating material to meet the educational needs of the students of Region 11.

While the Internet can provide students with a vast array of educational and informational resources, it can also be a window through which students could access information which is neither pertinent to nor appropriate for an educational setting. The availability of such electronic information does not imply endorsement by the Board of Education of its content nor of the use of such information by students and staff. It is important to give students assistance and guidance in accessing information which is beneficial to their education and equally important to recognize that total monitoring of students' access to the Internet would be impossible. Therefore, individual users of the Region 11 Network are responsible for their use of the network and are expected to use it responsibly.

To ensure appropriate usage, the administration will establish guidelines for student exploration and use of electronic information resources. Such guidelines shall address issues of privacy, ethical use of information with respect to intellectual property, illegal uses of the network, and conditions of usage. The guidelines shall strive to preserve students' rights to examine and use information to meet the educational goals and objectives of the District. In addition, the District shall take steps, such as using filtering programs to block access to objectionable material, access controls and supervision by staff to monitor and/or restrict access to the electronic informational resources.

In recognition of the potential for improper use of the Internet in the educational setting, the Board requires that students who use the Internet comply with the following policies, as well as comply with any guidelines for use promulgated by the administration:

The use of the Internet is a privilege. As the owner of both the hardware and software that is available, the District may withhold this privilege. Failure to adhere to the established guidelines may result in the loss of Internet access, disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities.

Use of the Internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational goals and objective of the District.

E-mail may be used for educational or administrative purposes. Electronic mail is not private. Those who operate the system have access to all mail which may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

Users must not reveal personal information about themselves or others, including, but not limited to, the following: home address, telephone numbers, password, social security number or credit card number.

Users will comply with all state, federal and local laws, including copyright laws and laws prohibiting harassment by computer.

Users must not interfere with others' work or with the performance of the computers, both hardware and software. Prohibited actions include, but are not

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limited to, the following: attempting to illicitly obtain or use passwords or screen names, entering closed areas of the network, introducing computer viruses or committing acts of vandalism, and/or any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user.

Users may not establish any official representation of the school or school district (i.e., Internet home page) without obtaining prior approval of school administration.

Each user will abide by the generally accepted rules of etiquette and applicable school policies, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

Use appropriate language.

Do not write or send abusive messages or those which contain vulgarities.

Chain letters and pyramid schemes (chain letters with money) are illegal.

Bulk posing to individuals or groups to overload the system (i.e., "spamming") is prohibited

To ensure that only authorized students who understand the bounds of permitted use will have access to the Internet, the District will obtain the written permission of a student's parent or legal guardian before the student may access the Internet.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

53a-182b. Harassment in the first degree: Class D felony. (as amended by PA 95-143)

20 U.S.C. Section 6777, No Child Left Behind Act

Tentative approval: 01/18/05

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