

Charlotte Public Schools Bylaws & Policies

7540.04 - STAFF NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY

Advances in telecommunications and other related technologies have fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in our society. Such changes are driving the need for educators to adapt their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to harness and utilize the vast, diverse, and unique resources available on the Internet. The Board of Education is pleased to provide Internet service to its staff. The Board encourages staff to utilize the Internet in order to promote educational excellence in our schools by providing them with the opportunity to develop the resource sharing, innovation, and communication skills and tools which will be essential to life and work in the 21st century. The Board encourages the faculty to develop the appropriate skills necessary to effectively access, analyze, evaluate, and utilize these resources. The instructional use of the Internet will be guided by the Board's policy on Instructional Materials.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting computers and users in the District with computers and users worldwide. Access to the Internet enables staff members to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards, while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. Access to such an incredible quantity of information and resources brings with it, however, certain unique challenges.

First, and foremost, the Board may not be able to technologically limit access to services through the Board's Internet connection to only those that have been authorized for the purpose of instruction, study and research related to the curriculum. Unlike in the past when educators and community members had the opportunity to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the curriculum according to adopted guidelines and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them), access to the Internet, because it serves as a gateway to any publicly available file server in the world, will open classrooms and students to electronic information resources which have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

The Board has implemented technology protection measures which block/filter Internet access to visual displays that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors. The Board utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of staff members to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. The Superintendent or Director of Technology may disable the technology protection measure to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

The Superintendent is directed to prepare guidelines which address students' safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication, and prohibit disclosure of personal identification information of minors and unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking") and other unlawful activities by minors online. Staff members are reminded that personally identifiable student information is confidential and may not be disclosed without prior written parental permission.

Building principals are responsible for providing training so that Internet users under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying guidelines. The Board

expects that staff members will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of the Internet. All Internet users are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Staff members are responsible for good behavior on Board's computers/network and the Internet just as they are in classrooms, school hallways, and other school premises and school sponsored events. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. The Board does not sanction any use of the Internet that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying guidelines. Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked, and disciplinary action taken against them. Users granted access to the Internet through the Board's computers assume personal responsibility and liability, both civil and criminal, for uses of the Internet not authorized by this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

The Board designates the Superintendent and Director of Technology as the administrators responsible for initiating, implementing, and enforcing this policy and its accompanying guidelines as they apply to the use of the Network and the Internet for instructional purposes.

H.R. 4577, P.L. 106-554, Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000
47 U.S.C. 254(h), (1), Communications Act of 1934, as amended
20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq., Part F, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965,
as amended
18 U.S.C. 2256
18 U.S.C. 1460
18 U.S.C. 2246