

District Policy & Regulations

BOARD OF EDUCATION COLUMBUS SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROPERTY
7540.02/PAGE 1 OF 2

STUDENT ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES

The Board of Education recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technologies shift the ways that information may be accessed, communicated and transferred by members of the society, those changes may also alter instruction and student learning. The Board supports access by students to rich information resources and student development of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources.

Telecommunications, electronic information sources and networked services significantly alter the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, instructional and library media materials could usually be screened prior to use by committees of educators and community members intent on subjecting all such materials to reasonable selection criteria. Board policy requires that all such materials be consistent with District-adopted guides, supporting and enriching the curriculum while taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students. Telecommunications, because it may lead to any publicly available files server in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources which have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to prepare students to be good citizens and future employees of the Age of Information. The Board expects employees to blend thoughtful use of educationally suitable information throughout the curriculum and to provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources. Staff is required to consult the guidelines for instructional materials contained in Board policy, and to comply with Board policies in selecting appropriate materials for use in instructing students in telecommunications research skills.

Students are responsible for good behavior on District computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are public not private in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The network is provided for students to conduct educationally suitable research and communicate with others about school-related topics and the District reserves the right to monitor and access a student's network activities and e-mail content. Access to network services will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Use of the District's computer networks and the Internet is a privilege, not a right.

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Independent student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission forms and agreement forms by parents of minor students (under eighteen (18) years of age) and by students themselves.

Access to telecommunications will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The Board believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed the disadvantages. However, the Board supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for independent student access to telecommunications resources.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to prepare appropriate procedures for implementing this policy, for conforming with state and federal requirements regarding student access to the Internet, and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on instruction and student achievement.

The District shall employ technology protection measures to filter and block inappropriate sites, including but not necessarily limited to those with visual depictions that are obscene, harmful to minors, or child pornography.

Approved: 08/27/98

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