

BREMEN CITY SCHOOLS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

DESCRIPTOR TERM: Internet Safety

DESCRIPTOR CODE: IFBGE

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2012

Important terms used in this document:

- (a) *The abbreviation 'ICT' in this document refers to the term 'Information and Communication Technologies.*
- (b) *'Cybersafety' refers to the safe and responsible use of the Internet and ICT equipment/devices, including mobile phones*
- (c) *'School ICT' refers to the school's computer network, Internet access facilities, computers, and other school ICT equipment/devices as outlined in (d) below*
- (d) *The term 'ICT equipment/devices' used in this document, includes but is not limited to, computers (such as desktops, laptops, PDAs), storage devices (such as USB and flash memory devices, CDs, DVDs, floppy disks, iPods, MP3 players), cameras (such as video, digital, webcams), all types of mobile phones, video and audio players/receivers (such as portable CD and DVD players), Gaming Consoles, and any other, similar, technologies as they come into use.*
- (e) *'CIPA' refers to the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.*

Bremen City Schools has a statutory obligation to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment, and a responsibility to consult with the community. In addition, Bremen City Schools Board of Education has a responsibility to be a good employer.

These three responsibilities are increasingly being linked to the use of the Internet and Information Communication Technologies (ICT), and a number of related cybersafety issues. The Internet and ICT devices/equipment bring great benefits to the teaching and learning programs, and to the effective operation of the school.

The Board of Bremen City Schools places a high priority on providing the school with Internet facilities and ICT devices/equipment which will benefit student learning outcomes, and the effective operation of the school.

However, the Board recognizes that the presence in the learning environment of these technologies (some provided partly or wholly by the school and some privately owned by staff, students and other members of the school community), can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal, material and activities. The school has the dual responsibility to maximize the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time to minimize and manage the risks.

The Board thus acknowledges the need to have in place rigorous and effective school cybersafety practices which are directed and guided by this cybersafety policy.

Policy

Bremen City Schools will develop and maintain rigorous and effective cybersafety practices which aim to maximize the benefits of the Internet and ICT devices/equipment to student learning and to the effective operation of the school, while minimizing and managing any risks.

These cybersafety practices will aim to not only maintain a cybersafe school environment, but also aim to address the need of students and other members of the school community to receive education about the safe and responsible use of present and developing information and communication technologies according to the requirements defined in section 54.520(c)(1)(i) paragraph 5 of the CIPA and required by the Protecting the Children in the 21st Century Act.

Policy guidelines

Associated issues the school will address include: the review of the school's annual and strategic plan, the deployment of staff, professional development and training, implications for the design and delivery of the curriculum, the need for relevant education about cybersafety for the school community, disciplinary responses appropriate to breaches of cybersafety, and potential employment issues.

To develop a cybersafe school environment, the board will delegate to the superintendent, administrators and/or other appropriate personnel the responsibility to achieve this goal by developing and implementing the appropriate management procedures, practices, electronic systems, and educational programs.

Guidelines for Bremen City Schools cybersafety practices

1. No individual may use the school Internet facilities and school-owned/leased ICT devices/equipment in any circumstances unless the appropriate use agreement has been signed and returned to the school. Use agreements also apply to the use of privately-owned/leased ICT devices/equipment on the school site, or at/for any school-related activity, regardless of its location. This includes off-site access to the school network from school or privately-owned/leased equipment.
2. Bremen City Schools use agreements will cover all board employees, all students, and any other individuals authorized to make use of the school Internet facilities and ICT devices/equipment, such as teacher trainees, external tutors and providers, contractors, and other special visitors to the school.
3. The use agreements are also an educative tool and should be used as a resource for the professional development of staff.
4. Use of the Internet and the ICT devices/equipment by staff, students and other approved users at Bremen City Schools is to be limited to educational, professional development, and personal usage appropriate in the school environment, as defined in individual use agreements.

5. Signed use agreements will be filed in a secure place, and an appropriate system devised which facilitates confirmation that particular individuals are authorized to make use of the Internet and ICT devices/equipment.
6. The school has the right to monitor, access, and review all use. This includes personal emails sent and received on the school's computer(s) and/or network facilities at all times.
7. The school district has the right to and will filter and/or monitor software and network traffic in order to restrict access to material that is inappropriate, age restricted, objectionable or otherwise 'harmful to minors' as is defined by section 1703(b)(1) and (2) of the CIPA.
8. The school has the right to audit at anytime any material on equipment that is owned or leased by the school. The school may also request permission to audit privately owned ICT devices/equipment used on the school site or at any school related activity.
9. Issues relating to confidentiality, such as student information, reasons for collecting data and the secure storage of personal details and information (including images) will be subject to the provisions of the Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g ; 34 CFR Part 99).
10. The safety of children is of paramount concern. Any apparent breach of cybersafety will be taken seriously. The response to individual incidents will follow the procedures developed as part of the school's cybersafety practices. In serious incidents, advice will be sought from an appropriate source, such as the Georgia Department of Education or the legal representation retained by Bremen City Schools with specialist knowledge in this area. There will be special attention paid to the need for specific procedures regarding the gathering of evidence in potentially serious cases. If illegal material or activities are suspected, the matter may need to be reported to the relevant law enforcement agency.

Bremen City Schools, Bremen, GA