

# Rockford Public Schools

## Bylaws & Policies

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### **7540.03 - STUDENT EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY**

Technology has fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated and transferred in society. As a result, educators are continually adapting their means and methods of instruction and the way they approach student learning to incorporate the vast, diverse and unique resources available through the Internet. The Board provides Education Technology so students can acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board provides students with access to the Internet for limited educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services to enhance the instruction delivered to the students. The District's Internet system does not serve as a public access service or a public forum and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its limited educational purpose.

This policy, and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct, govern students' use of the District's computers, laptops, tablets, personal communication devices (as defined by Policy [5136](#)), network and Internet connection and online educational services (Education Technology or Ed-Tech). The due process rights of all users will be respected in the event there is a suspicion of inappropriate use of the Education Technology. Users have no right or expectation to privacy when using the Ed-Tech (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, e-mails and records of their online activity while on the network and Internet).

This policy, and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct, also govern students' use of their personal communication devices (that is, according to Policy [5136](#), computers, laptops, tablets, e-readers, cellular/mobile telephones, smartphones and any other web-enabled device), when connected to the District's network, the District's Internet connection and online educational services (Education Technology or Ed-Tech). The due process rights of all users will be respected in the event there is a suspicion of inappropriate use of the Education Technology. Users have no right or expectation to privacy when using the Ed-Tech (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, e-mails and records of their online activity while on the network and Internet).

First and foremost the Board may not be able to technologically limit access to services through its Educational Technology to only those services and resources 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, opens classrooms and students to electronic information resources that may not have been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Pursuant to federal law, the Board has implemented technology protection measures which protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography and/or are harmful to minors as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. At the discretion of the Board or the Superintendent, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The Board also utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. The Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online education services containing appropriate material if access to such sites has been inappropriately blocked by the technology protection measures. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material not on the protection actions of the technology protection measures.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to services on the Internet that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that they and/or their parents may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Parents assume risks by consenting to allow their student to participate in the use of the Internet. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their students should follow when using Education Technology. The Board supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to apply for independent student access to the Education Technology.

The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using the Education Technology, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under the Children's Internet Protection Act. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be subject to discipline.

Pursuant to federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- A. safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- B. the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally-identifiable information;
- C. the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking"), cyberbullying and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online; and
- D. unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

Professional staff members shall provide instruction for their students regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified above. Furthermore, District employees will monitor the online activities of students while at school.

Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server and computer logs.

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 professional staff members will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of the Education Technology. Such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response. All Internet users (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

If students are assigned a school email account, then they will be required to utilize it for all school-related electronic communications, including those to professional staff members and individuals and/or organizations outside the District with whom they are communicating for school-related projects and assignments. Further, as directed and authorized by professional staff members, students shall use their school-assigned email account when signing-up/registering for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes.

Students and professional staff members are responsible for good behavior on the District'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 Education Technology that is not authorized by, or conducted strictly in compliance with, this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Students shall not access social media for personal use from the District's network but shall be permitted to access social media for educational use in accordance with the professional staff member's approved plan for such use.

Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked and disciplinary action taken against them. Users of the Board's Education Technology are personally liable, both civilly and criminally, for uses of the Education Technology not authorized by this Board policy and its accompanying guidelines.

The Board designates the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum as the administrators responsible for initiating, implementing and enforcing this policy and its accompanying guidelines as they apply to the use of the District's Education Technology and the Internet for instructional purposes.

P.L. 106-554, Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000

P.L. 110-385, Title II, Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act

18 U.S.C. 1460

18 U.S.C. 2246

18 U.S.C. 2256

20 U.S.C. 6777, 9134 (2003)

20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq., Part F, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (2003)

47 U.S.C. 254(h), (1), Communications Act of 1934, as amended (2003)

47 C.F.R. 54.520

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