INTERNET FILTERING
(REGULATION)

The Internet changes rapidly, making it impossible to filter all objectionable sites. Therefore, the staff role in supervising and monitoring student access to the Internet is critical. Additionally, staff members have the responsibility to monitor their own navigation on the Internet to avoid undesirable sites.

Filtering should be viewed as only one of a number of techniques used to manage student access to the Internet and encourage acceptable usage. Filtering should not be viewed as a foolproof approach to preventing access to inappropriate material and should be used in conjunction with:

Educating students to be "net-smart;"

Using recognized Internet gateways as a searching tool and/or homepage for students, in order to facilitate access to appropriate material;

Using "Acceptable Use Agreements;"

Using behavior management practices for which Internet access privileges can be earned or lost; and

Appropriate supervision, either in person and/or electronically.

The placement of filters on district computers/computer systems is viewed as an exercise of the board's ability to determine educational suitability of all material used in the schools.

Filters may be utilized with district schools to (1) block pre-selected sites, (2) block by word, (3) block entire categories like chat and newsgroups, and (4) through a pre-selected list of approved sites.

Criteria for Filtering of Objectionable Sites

Anything that falls under at least one of the following categories shall be blocked. This list may be update/modified as required.

     Nudity/Pornography

       Prevailing U.S. standards for nudity (e.g., genitalia, female breasts)
       Provocative semi-nudity (e.g., lingerie models)
       Sites that contain pornography or links to pornographic sites
       Exceptions: Classical nudity (e.g., Michelangelo), swimsuit models

     Sexuality

       Sites that contain material of a mature level (elementary/middle school levels)
       Images or descriptions of sexual aids
       Descriptions of sexual acts or techniques
       Sites that contain inappropriate personal ads

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___ **Violence**

    ___ Sites that promote violence
    ___ Images or a description of graphically violent acts (rape, dismemberment, torture, etc.)
    ___ Graphic autopsy or crime-scene images

___ **Crime**

    ___ Information on performing criminal acts (e.g., drug or bomb making, computer "hacking")
    ___ Illegal file archives (e.g., software piracy)

___ **Drug Use**

    ___ Sites that promote the use of illegal drugs
    ___ Material advocating the use of illegal drugs (e.g., marijuana, LSD) or abuse of any drug (e.g., drinking-game rules)
    ___ **Exceptions:** Material with valid educational use (e.g., drug-use statistics)

___ **Tastelessness**

    ___ Images or descriptions of excretory acts (e.g., vomiting, urinating)
    ___ Graphic medical images outside of a medical context
    ___ **Exception:** Graphic medical images within a medical context

___ **Language/Profanity**

    ___ Passages/words too coarse to be softened by the word filter
    ___ Profanity within images/sounds/multimedia files
    ___ Sexually or racially tinged language

NOTE: The focus is on American English, but profanity in other languages or dialects will be blocked if brought to our attention.

___ **Discrimination/Intolerance**

    ___ Material advocating discrimination (e.g., racial or religious intolerance)
    ___ Sites that promote intolerance, hate, or discrimination

___ **Interactive Mail/Chat**

    ___ Sites that contain or allow inappropriate e-mail correspondence
    ___ Sites that contain or allow inappropriate chat areas

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____ **Inappropriate Banner Acts**

    ____ Advertisements containing inappropriate images

____ **Gambling**

    ____ Sites that allow or promote online gambling

____ **Weapons**

    ____ Sites that promote illegal weapons
    ____ Sites that promote the use of illegal weapons

____ **Other Inappropriate Material**

    ____ Body modification: tattooing, branding, cutting, etc.

____ **Judgment Calls**

    ____ Whether a page is likely to have more questionable material in the future (e.g., sites under construction whose names indicate questionable material)

<u>Procedure for Suggesting Sites be Blocked</u>

If district staff members observe a site that they believe to contain inappropriate material according to the above criteria, they may request that the site (URL) be blocked. Education Technology staff will review the site for inappropriateness. If the site meets the criteria for filtering, steps will be taken to block the site.

REFERENCE: **Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by section 513 of PL 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.).**
Dept. of Education. 34 CFR. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g), parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to education records, as amended 11/21/96. Public Law 94-553, The Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et seq.