



# VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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# AGENDA ITEM

**Agenda Item:** V

**Date:** April 25, 2024

**Title:** First Review of Draft Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety

**Presenter:** Dr. Michelle Wallace, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

### **Purpose of Presentation**

Action required by state or federal law or regulation

### **Executive Summary**

The Virginia Department of Education (“VDOE”) developed the *Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety* and instructional practices and content in response to [§ 22.1-24.1. Internet Safety Advisory Council](#) with input as required by the law from individuals and organizations throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. It represents the knowledge and perspectives of teachers, researchers, law enforcement, nonprofit organizations, as well as local, state, and federal representatives. The purpose of this council is to advance the goal of safe use of media and technology by students and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth. This document and accompanying instructional resources have been developed for local school boards in the Commonwealth to enable such school boards to better ensure the internet safety of all students and teachers in the local school division. While this document offers recommendations, specific integration details are left to the discretion of local education agencies.

These recommendations support Priority 5 of the [Board's Comprehensive Plan: 2024-2029](#): to advance safe and healthy schools.

These recommendations support Goal 2 of the Virginia Educational Technology Plan: 2024-2029: Promote leadership that supports learning experiences for all students that integrate innovative instructional practices by educators through the use of technology and accessible instructional materials. Subpoint 3: Support students, educators, leaders, and families with resources for the purpose of advancing the goal of safe use of media and technology.

### **Action Requested**

Action will be requested at a future meeting: June 27, 2024

### **Superintendent's Recommendation**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the *Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety* with accompanying instructional resources.

### **Previous Review or Action**

No previous review or action.

### **Background Information and Statutory Authority**

Currently school divisions adhere with current federal, state, and local laws relating to internet safety.

Federal Laws: [Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#), [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act \(COPPA\)](#), [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment \(PPRA\)](#), [Individuals with Disabilities Act \(IDEA\)](#), Rehabilitation Act: [Section 504](#), and [Children Internet Protection Act \(CIPA\)](#)

Code of Virginia: [Acceptable Use Policy](#), [Students' personally identifiable information](#), [Broadband services for educational purposes](#), [Instructional technology resource teachers and technical support](#), [Integration of educational technology into instructional programs](#), and [Professional development in the use of educational technology](#).

Section [22.1-24.1](#) of the Code of Virginia provides that the Superintendent of Public Instruction "shall establish and appoint members of the Internet Safety Advisory Council (the Council) for the purpose of advancing the goal of safe use of media and technology by students and teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth." The statute sets out the membership of the Council. This section of Code was added by Chapter 776 during the 2022 General Assembly. Chapter 111 (2023 Acts of Assembly) amended this section to add that the Council may collaborate with law-enforcement agencies, criminal justice agencies, and other nongovernmental organizations with expertise in child online safety issues and human trafficking prevention. The statute is in effect until July 1, 2024.

The duties of the Council include:

- Developing recommendations to the Board of Education for adoption, a model policy for local school boards that would enable them to better support the Internet safety of all students and teachers;
- Developing recommendations to the Board of Education for adoption, model instructional practices for and instructional content on the safe use of media and technology by students and teachers; and
- Designing and posting on the VDOE website a page with links to successful instructional practices, curricula, and other teacher resources.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Internet Safety Advisory Council members were appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

- Robbi Moose, Hungry Creek Middle School, Administrator
- Spencer Phillips, Douglas S Freeman High School, Student
- Mychael Willon, Williamsburg, Parent; President of the Virginia Middle School Association, Chair of Virginia's Special Education Advisory Committee
- Emily Heller, Fredericksburg City Schools, ITRT; VSTE, Chair
- Mary R. Martin-Bodrick, Prince William County, mathematics educator
- Retired Sheriff Michael J Brown, Bedford County
- Kelly Passek, Montgomery County Schools, librarian; VAASL President
- Tom Landon, Blue Ridge PBS, Director of Instructional Innovation
- Carrie Rogers-Whitehead, Digital Respons-Ability, Founder & CEO
- Makayla Burnett, Department of Criminal Justice Services, State Trafficking Response Coordinator
- Calypso Gilstrap, Virginia Department of Education, Associate Director of the Office of Educational Technology and Classroom Innovation
- Julia Fallon, SETDA, Executive Director

The Council met on September 18th, 2023, October 16th, 2023, November 20th, 2023, and January 8th, 2024.

- September 2023
  - Advisors shared background and expertise
  - Review of the code, set expectations
  - Presentation on the background of Virginia's Internet Safety initiatives
- October 2023
  - Advisors shared curated resources related to the issues addressed in the statute.
  - The council created a bibliography of the curated resources

- November 2023
  - Advisors share curated resources
  - The council created a selection criterion for resources
  - Advisors discussed what guidance they would like to see in the model policy
- January 2024
  - Advisors shared exemplars of policies and other frameworks
  - Open discussion of the draft language for the model policy concerning internet safety
- February – March 2024
  - The Office of Educational Technology and Classroom Innovation worked to
    - Develop the model policy
    - Select resources and instructional models
    - Build the hub

### **Implementation and Communication**

- Once approved by the Board, the *Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety* will be posted to the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall in accordance with the Administrative Process Act.
- Once posted, a Superintendent’s Update will be published to inform stakeholders we are requesting feedback.
- Revision process.
- Return to the Board for adoption.

### **Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources**

Additional revisions to the *Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety* with accompanying resources can be absorbed by the agency’s existing resources at this time. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this activity, other services may be impacted.