



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: F

Date: June 21, 2024

Title: Final Review of the Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety

Presenter: Em Cooper, Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Purpose of Presentation

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Executive Summary

The Department 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 of Education Comprehensive Plan: 2024-2029](#): to advance safe and healthy schools.

These recommendations support the Virginia Educational Technology Plan: 2024-2029; Goal 2: 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

Adoption of the Model Policy concerning Internet Safety and supporting resources.

Superintendent's Recommendation

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

Previous Review or Action

Date: April 25, 2024

Action: Board accepted for first review

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 the following:

- 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 Department's 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 18, 2023, October 16, 2023, November 20, 2023, and January 8, 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 shared 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 internet safety resource hub.
- April – June 2024
 - The VDOE curated research, adjusted definitions, and updated the model policy to reflect the recommendations of the Board.
 - Expanded the definition of Digital from “Citizenship from the state of being skilled in using the internet in order to communicate with others in a safe and responsible way” to “the responsible, ethical, and safe use of technology and the internet. It involves navigating the digital world with respect, integrity, and empathy towards others. At its core, digital citizenship emphasizes the importance of being mindful of one’s online presence and interactions, just as one would be in the physical world. By promoting digital citizenship, educators and parents help equip children and young adults with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and digital society while fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and ethical behavior online.”
 - Expounded on the integration of the Digital Learning Integration Standards of Learning into the curriculum, especially in the content strand of Digital Citizenship.
 - Added language to address screen time: "Emphasize digital wellness by establishing healthy screen time limits, encouraging educator to a balance between screen-based activities and other pursuits, and promote activities that support physical, social, and cognitive development. Consider factors such as: physical health, sleep disruption, social and emotional development, cognitive development, and academic

performance. Create common blended learning spaces in the classroom that support physical, emotional, social and cognitive development to increase engagement, physical movement, and collaboration.”

- Compiled resources about healthy screen time skills which were added to the hub on the VDOE’s website.

Implementation and Communication

Once adopted, a Virginia Education Update will be published to inform school boards and superintendents to consider the policy for local 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.