

Board Policy IFBGA: Electronic Communications

Status: ADOPTED

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The ~~Bibb County Board of Education~~ Board of Public Education for Bibb County ("Board") believes the appropriate use of a full range of technology/electronic resources, including electronic communications tools, is important to provide to students and staff. Use of all electronic resources and communication devices in a responsible manner will support the vision, mission, and goals established by the Bibb County School District ("District"). "Technology resources" is defined as "local and networked resources provided by the District such as, but not limited to: computers, smartphones, portable handheld devices, electronic reference databases, Internet, communication/assessment tools, audio and video equipment, distance learning, virtual field trips, and other educational or administrative programs".

Access to the Internet is automatically available/provided to students and staff members and may be provided to other stakeholders. The District monitors the online activities of staff and students to address inappropriate use of the Internet as required by as provided by law, to include the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Policy IFBG and Regulation IFBG-R(1) (Internet Acceptable Use), Policy IFBGA (Electronic Communications), and Policy JCDAF (Use of Electronic Devices by Students) govern the use of electronic resources. Violation of these policies and regulations shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Board policies and administrative regulations, the Code of Student Conduct, Employee Handbook, and/or as otherwise provided by law.

~~In an effort to provide protection measures for District, staff, and students, the District utilizes a firewall to regulate access to external resources and information. In addition, the District provides Internet filtering that protects against access to visual depictions of materials deemed obscene, violent, pornographic, and/or any other materials deemed harmful to minors. Due to the constant changes to Internet websites, filtering and virus protection software are not always completely effective. Therefore, schools are expected to monitor student technology use on a regular basis. The District monitors the online activities of staff and students to address inappropriate use of the Internet as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).~~

Social Media

In accordance with the Protecting Georgia's Children on Social Media Act, the District prohibits students from accessing social media platforms through the use of computer equipment, communications services, or internet access that is operated, owned, leased, and made available to students by the Board and District. The District shall take steps as it deems appropriate to implement and enforce this policy, including use of software programs or other technologies reasonably designed and intended to block and monitor access to social media platforms and selection of online servers that block and monitor access to social media platforms.

"Social media platform" means an online forum that allows an account holder to create a profile, upload posts, view and listen to posts, form mutual connections, and interact publicly and privately with other account holders and users, and as otherwise set out in O.C.G.A. § 39-6-1.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent or his or her designee to implement a regulation regarding the use of electronic communications and social media in the District.