

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-495. Electronic Devices in Public Schools.

R277-495-1. Authority and Purpose.

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law;

(c) Subsection 53G-8-202(2)(c)(i), which directs the Superintendent to develop a conduct and discipline policy model for elementary and secondary public schools; and

(d) 47 CFR, Part 54, Children's Internet Protection Act, which requires schools and libraries that have computers with internet access to certify they have internet safety policies and technology protection measures in place to receive discounted internet access and services.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to direct all LEAs and public schools to adopt policies, individually or collectively as school districts or consortia of charter schools, governing the possession and use of electronic devices including:

(a) both LEA-owned and privately-owned, while on public school premises or during participation in school activities; and

(b) for LEA-owned devices, wherever the LEA-owned devices are used.

R277-495-2. Definitions.

(1) "Acceptable use policy" means a document stipulating constraints and practices that a user shall accept before a user accessing an LEA's, or any school within an LEA's, network or the internet.

(2) "Electronic device" means a device that is used for audio, video, or text communication or any other type of computer or computer-like instrument including:

(a) a smart phone;

(b) a smart or electronic watch;

(c) a tablet; or

(d) a virtual reality device.

(3) "Guest" means an individual:

(a) who is not a student, employee, or designated volunteer of a public school;

and

(b) who is on school property or at the site of a school-sponsored activity or event.

(4) "Inappropriate matter" means pornographic or indecent material as defined in Subsection 76-10-1235(1)(a) and Section 53G-10-103.

(5) "LEA" includes for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

(6) "LEA-owned electronic device" means a device that is used for audio, video, text communication, or other type of computer or computer-like instrument that is identified as being owned, provided, issued or lent by the LEA to a student or employee.

(7) "Policy" means an electronic device use policy as required by this rule that contains:

(a) permissible uses of an electronic device under certain circumstances; or

(b) restricted uses of an electronic devices under certain circumstances.

(8) "Privately-owned electronic device" means a device, including an electronic device that is used for audio, video, text communication, or other type of computer or computer-like instrument that is not owned or issued by the LEA to a student, or employee.

(9) "Public school" means a school or public school program, grades kindergarten through 12, that is part of the Utah public school system, including a school with a distance learning program or alternative program.

(10) "Student," for purposes of this rule, means an individual enrolled as a student at an LEA regardless of the part-time nature of the enrollment or the age of the individual.

(11)(a) "The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)" means federal regulations enacted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and administered by the Schools and Libraries Division of the FCC.

(b) CIPA and companion laws, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (NCIPA) and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, require recipients of

federal technology funds to comply with certain internet filtering and policy requirements.

(12) "Utah Education Telehealth Network or UETN" means the Utah Education and Telehealth Network created in Section 53B-17-105.

R277-495-3. Requirement of Electronic Device Use Policy, Creation, and Access.

(1) An LEA shall require all schools under the LEA's supervision to have a policy or policies for students, employees and, where appropriate, for guests, governing the use of electronic devices on school premises and at school-sponsored activities.

(2) An LEA shall review and approve policies regularly.

(3) An LEA shall encourage schools to involve teachers, parents, students, school employees, school community councils, and community members in developing the local policies.

(4) An LEA shall provide copies of the LEA's policies or clear electronic links to policies at LEA offices, in schools and on the LEA's website in the same location as the LEA's data governance plan required in Rule R277-487.

(5) An LEA and all schools within the LEA shall cooperate to ensure that all policies within a school or school district are consistent and accessible to parents and community members.

(6) An LEA shall provide reasonable public notice and at least one public hearing or meeting to address a proposed or revised acceptable use policy.

(7) An LEA shall retain documentation of the policy review and adoption actions.

R277-495-4. LEA Electronic Device Policy Requirements.

(1) An LEA's policy shall include at least the following:

(a) definitions of electronic devices covered by policy;

(b) prohibitions on the use of electronic devices in ways that:

(i) significantly impair academic excellence;

(ii) bully, humiliate, harass, or intimidate school-related individuals, including students, employees, and guests, consistent with Rules R277-609 and R277-613; or

(iii) violate local, state, or federal laws;

(c) the prohibition of access by students, LEA employees and guests to inappropriate matter on the internet and world wide web while using LEA equipment, services, or connectivity whether on or off school property;

(e) directives on the safety and security of students when using social media and other forms of electronic communications;

(f) directives on unauthorized access, including hacking and other unlawful activities by a user of an LEA electronic device; and

(g) directives on unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal student information under Rule R277-487 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)34 CFR, Part 99.

(2) In addition to the requirements of Subsection (1), an LEA's policies for student use of electronic devices shall include directives regarding the following:

(a) the use of privately-owned electronic devices during standardized assessments;

(b) administrative penalties for misuse of electronic devices during school hours or at a school-sponsored activity, program, or event;

(c) violations of an LEA's acceptable use policies that may result in confiscation of LEA-owned electronic devices or restricted access on the LEA's;

(d) a student's personal responsibility for devices assigned or provided to a student by the LEA, both for loss or damage of electronic devices and use of electronic devices consistent with the LEA's directives;

(e) use of electronic devices in violation of an LEA's or teacher's instructional policies may result in the confiscation of privately-owned electronic devices for a designated period and may result in the school contacting a parent to address the alleged violation; and

(f) uses of privately-owned electronic devices to bully or harass other students or employees during school hours or at school-sponsored activities that may result in the student being subject to LEA disciplinary action.

(3) In addition to Subsections (1) and (2), directives for employee use of electronic devices shall include:

(a) notice that use of electronic devices to access inappropriate matter on LEA-owned electronic devices or privately-owned electronic devices on school property, at school-sponsored events or using school connectivity may have criminal, employment or student disciplinary consequences, and if appropriate, may be reported to law enforcement;

(b) notice that an employee is responsible for LEA-issued electronic devices at all times and misuse of an electronic device may have employment consequences, regardless of the user; and

(c) required staff responsibilities in educating minors on appropriate online activities, as required by Section 53G-7-1202, and in supervising such activities.

(4) An LEA's policies shall also include the following:

(a) prohibitions or restrictions on unauthorized use that would cause invasions of reasonable expectations of student and employee privacy;

(b) procedures to report the misuse of electronic devices; and

(c) potential disciplinary actions toward students or employees for violation of local policies regarding the use of electronic devices; and

(d) exceptions to the policy for special circumstances, health-related reasons and emergencies, if any.

(5) An LEA shall certify annually through UETN, and as required by the FCC, that the LEA has a CIPA-compliant acceptable use policy.

R277-495-5. Required School Level Training.

(1) A school shall provide, within the first 45 days of each school year, a school-wide or in-classroom training to employees and students that covers:

(a) the contents of the school's policy;

(b) the importance of digital citizenship;

(c) the LEA's conduct and discipline related consequences as related to a violation of the school's policy;

(d) the LEA's general conduct and discipline policies as described in Section 53G-8-202; and

(e) the benefits of connecting to the internet and utilizing the school's internet filters, while on school premises.

(2) A school that adopts a permissible use policy shall:

(a) within the first 45 days of each school-year, provide school-wide or in-classroom training to employees and students that covers:

(i) the elements described in Subsections (1)(a) through (e); and

(ii) specific rules governing the permissible and restricted uses of personal electronic devices while in a classroom; and

(b) require that each educator who allows the use of a personal electronic device in the classroom clearly communicates to parents and students the conditions under which the use of a personal electronic device is allowed.

R277-495-6. Resources and Required Assurances.

(1) The Superintendent may provide resources, upon request, for an LEA regarding electronic device policies, including:

(a) sample acceptable use policies;

(b) general best practices for electronic device use as outlined in Rule R277-922; and

(c) materials for digital citizenship as outlined in Section 53G-7-1202.

(2) An LEA shall post the LEA's electronic device use policy on the LEA's website and provide a link to the Board through the annual assurances document described in Rule R277-108.

R277-495-7. LEA Requirement to Notify Parents of Filtering Options.

An LEA shall provide an annual notice to all parents of the location of information for in-home network filtering options as provided for in Section 76-10-1231.

KEY: electronic devices, policy

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53E-3-401(4); 53G-8-202(2)(c)(i)