

School Safety and Digital Citizenship Responsibilities

For LEAs, School Community Councils and Charter Trust Lands Councils

Summary of Responsibilities

As with other responsibilities of school community councils, it is intended that administrators, staff and parents engage together to bring about the best possible result for students. Legislation gives councils an assignment to address digital citizenship and school safety. (HB 213 of 2016 and HB 303 of 2019)

State Board Rule R277-491, Utah Code 53G-7-1202(3)(a)(v)(B) and 53G-7-1205(7)(b) require at least an annual report and discussion between the council and district administration or charter school administration that results in coordination of effort to incorporate safety principles at the school. A report from the administration creates an understanding of programs, plans, and training for students and parents currently in place at each school. The required communication will provide some background for councils to begin a school specific discussion of school safety and digital citizenship, including proactive opportunities that promote the overall plans and objectives.

It is recommended, but not required, that the annual discussion with councils and administrators include IT specialists, school resource officers and those providing mental health support. The council may want to engage students in a discussion to understand student concerns and opportunities as plans are made.

Digital Citizenship

Administration Responsibilities – Report to School Community Councils

The LEA report may include:

- What filters are being used and how do they work?
- Are there different settings used for different grades and school levels?
- What is the district filtering policy on frequently used sites such as YouTube, Google Images, Weebly, etc.?
- Are there management systems available (MDM, Chrome management, LanSchool, etc.) that can add additional supervision and appropriately limit access?
- What resources does the district provide concerning educating students on safe internet use and digital citizenship?
- What is the protocol for students, employees and parents in district schools when inappropriate content is accessed?
- District capabilities to change filtering, settings and management tools based on best practices, technological limitations, and funding. Where applicable, districts could include what is provided in connection with e-rate funding.

School administration should add to the LEA report (at a minimum):

- What devices are being used and how are students using them?
- What are the main applications, programs, and sites used in different classes, grade levels, and subject areas?
- What supervision practices are in place when students are online?
- Are there management tools used that allow teachers to digitally monitor student use or limit access to some applications or sites?
- What are the school rules when inappropriate information appears for students, staff and parents?
- Are there safe reporting procedures for students, staff, and parents? How does the school balance access and safety that is grade level appropriate?
- What does the administration see as important opportunities for students related to constructive, proactive technology use?
- What does the administration see as the greatest internet threats for students?
- What are the policies in place for tablets, cell phones, etc. brought from home?
- Explain training currently provided:
 - To students about digital citizenship and safe use of technology
 - To parents and guardians about how to discuss and support digital citizenship and safe technology use with their children and how to report inappropriate content

Council Responsibilities

Councils may create a subcommittee to help accomplish digital citizenship responsibilities entirely or in part and may partner with non-profit organizations to assist in the education components. It is the responsibility of the council to see that the following is completed each year:

- Receive the report from the district and school administration (as described above).
- Discuss the report and decide:
 1. If the filtering, management systems, and supervision practices are appropriate. If not, identify what needs to be addressed in context with administrative capabilities what the school and district are capable of providing under the current filtering and management systems, supervision availability, and financial restrictions. Establish an action plan to address identified concerns.
 2. If **student education** currently implemented is appropriate and adequate. If not, identify how it could be strengthened, set goals to improve the education and create an action plan to accomplish the goals.
 3. If the **parent/guardian education** component currently implemented is appropriate and adequate. If not, identify how it could be strengthened, set goals to improve the education component and create an action plan to accomplish the goals.

School Safety

Administration Responsibilities

A discussion with the council should include but may not be limited to the following:

- Information appropriate for councils relating to building and ground safety, screening and training for school staff, access for non-custodial parents, and crisis and emergency response protocol.

- School and student needs and support related to school culture, mental health and safe school violations.
- Transportation, parking lot and safe walking route plans and protocols
- How the school is addressing safety requirements in the law that involve parents
 - o Annual safety seminar 53G-9-703
 - o Council involvement in preparing electronic device policy R277-495-3
 - o School climate survey 53G-8-802
 - o Emergency preparedness and emergency response plan review R277-400
- How does administration and staff balance safety with creating a setting for learning?
- What recent actions (over the past few years) has the administration and staff taken to increase a safe and wholesome learning environment?
- What does the administration see as the greatest day to day safety concerns?

Council Responsibilities

Councils are recommending bodies to the administration and local boards (district and charter) on issues that involve legal responsibility and financial commitments. Recommendations related to school access, building safety including playgrounds, state and federal safe school violations, etc. may be directed to the local board, as appropriate. As a result of the discussion, councils will understand there are opportunities for councils and parents to improve and address day to day safety at the school.

- Participate in the discussion. Listen to understand. Ask questions.
- Discuss and identify priorities where the council may be effective.
- Select a priority or two that councils could address.
- Prepare an action plan to address the identified issue. The action plan should include a goal, a measurement to know how well the goal was achieved and a timeline with assignments and responsibilities for reporting back. It is important to identify how the goal will support safety principles as defined above.
- The action plan could include the involvement of experts and other parent groups at the school.

There are resources and website links at <https://schools.utah.gov/resources> to assist school community councils in completing school safety and digital citizenship responsibilities.

Please note that some safety discussions must be reserved for closed meetings of the local board of education. Concerns of this nature should be forwarded to the board

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