

**Protecting Children in the 21st Century/CIPA
Facebook/Social Networking Guidance for Teachers**

http://transition.fcc.gov/wcb/tapd/universal_service/schoolsandlibs.html

Attached is a thumbnail sketch of the FCC Report and Order around the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, following by initial guidance for teachers on the use of Facebook and other ‘popular’ social networking sites in schools.

A. Protecting Children in the 21st century Act:

1. Adds statutory language to existing FCC rules for implementing CIPA.
2. Has an impact on ERate compliance.
3. Requires that school districts’ **board policies** provide for the *education of minors regarding appropriate online behavior including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and regarding cyberbullying awareness and response.*
4. This requirement is in addition to existing CIPA requirements.

B. In addition to policy language, it is important to note that the FCC also specifically mentions Facebook and MySpace, as well as addressing other social networking sites. The FCC finds that:

1. Individual pages on Facebook or MySpace might be potentially harmful to minors, but
2. These sites are not “**harmful to minors**”, per se, and
3. Do not fall into a category of websites which must be blocked.
4. Further noting recent work by the Department of Education, the FCC and the DOE suggest that “social networking websites have the potential to support student learning...” (FCC 11-125 Report and Order, p.8)

C. Implications:

1. By July 1, 2012, School Boards will have to create or update current Internet Use policies to include wording that **they are teaching Internet safety**,
2. Districts will have to decide how, who and with what they will implement this new requirement.
3. With the comments on Facebook and other social networking sites, and with the inclusion of social networking within required Board policy language, education and training around both appropriate and pedagogical uses of social networking resources will be critical.
4. Districts and schools will need background and training on issues, materials, approaches, resources.
5. Cyberbullying awareness and response will need to be included within ongoing harassment, intimidation and bullying training and program implementation.
6. As the education of minors about appropriate online behavior, digital citizenship, cyberbullying, etc., covers a wide range of issues and topics, it will be very important for prevention-intervention, school safety, counseling, educational technology and content specialists to work closely to create as effective and all-encompassing digital safety education program as possible.

7. Additional digital safety/citizenship and cyberbullying background guidance, resources and materials will be posted in the School Safety Center website.
<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/InternetSafety/default.aspx>
8. In addition, ERate compliance guidance and information will be linked from the Educational Technology website <http://www.k12.wa.us/EdTech/E-rate/default.aspx> .

Preliminary Guidance on the use of Facebook, MySpace and other Social Networking Sites in Schools

- Recognizing the value of social networking in 21st century education,
- Recognizing that social networking is specifically mentioned in **Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act and FCC guidance**,
- Recognizing that the FCC guidance states specifically that filtering of Facebook, My Space and other social networking sites is not necessarily required, and finally,
- Recognizing that there are potential safety, security and liability issues, the following is **preliminary guidance for educators on the use of social networking sites in schools**:

1. **Check and follow** your most current district / school policies and procedures on the use of social networking tools in schools. The policy you may be called by some variation of your district's *Internet Use, Network Use, Internet Access, or Network Access* policy. You will also want to check your district's Internet or network use/access agreement for students and staff.
2. **Keep** personal and professional/educational accounts separate.
 - a. There might be different, separate accounts through the same service, however.
 - b. Do not use social networking sites which do not come through your district network.
3. **Never friend a student** on a personal site.
4. **Do not share** personal information on your professional/educational site.
5. **Remember**: using a social networking site for educational purposes has the potential for extending your school day beyond the school day and the school walls.
 - a. It also has the potential of exposing students to your own or to others' personal information, even inadvertently.
6. **All rules** which **apply** to your bricks-and-mortar classroom and school apply to the online, social networking environment: bullying, harassment, courtesy, appropriate language, timeliness, etc.
7. **Inform and involve** school administration
8. **Inform and involve** parents/guardians as appropriate. However, this also may be problematic:
 - a. Inviting parents to join/participate would be tantamount to inviting parents to be involved in your classroom every day.
 - b. The parents would have to know that they should not join using their 'personal' sites.
 - c. Remember: there are students from broken, blended or other non-standard families, as well as some with no-contact orders. The teachers would have to be able to negotiate through all that in some, not too demanding way.
 - d. This might involve a small number of students, but potential risk and liability issues arise.
9. **Do not friend** other adults on your educational site.
 - a. Allow for the possibility of inviting "special guests" for specific educational purposes.
 - b. For such a professional guest profile-type, establish a vetting process, done by the educator using some sort of rubric.
 - c. Establish what the expert guest would need to agree to be involved?
 - d. Consider the involvement of teaching team members, student teachers, specialists, counselors and/or administrators
10. **Read, become familiar** with all site-related *Terms of Use* documentation.

11. **Read, understand and set** up all appropriate *privacy settings*.
12. **Instruct students** that this is an educational site;
 - a. They are not to share it with or invite others who are not in the class.
 - b. Use it for content instruction.
 - c. Use it for educating students about appropriate inline behavior.
13. **Instruct students** on both Terms of Use and privacy settings.
14. **Inform students** that you are obligated to report illegal behavior, child abuse, sexual abuse, etc.
15. **Monitor** the site closely.