



Internet Acceptable Use Policy Summary

Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-1-221 provides that the commissioner of education submit an Internet Acceptable Use Policy Summary on December 1, 2008 and biennially thereafter to the chairs of the Education committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Information presented in this report summarizes data from Tennessee local education agencies (LEAs), as well as targeted outcomes of the objectives set forth in the law.

This report reflects the status of districts' acceptable use policies. "Acceptable Use" is defined as a district's norms and policies for student and employee access to computing equipment and broadband services. The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) measured LEA's Acceptable Use Policies using a set of six metrics as derived from TCA 49-1-221(a)(1). These metrics include:

- Prohibition of inappropriate use
(provides a general definition of inappropriate use of school network and devices)
- Measures to prevent harm or harassment
(discussion of issues such as cyberbullying)
- Filter pornography and obscenities
(explicit statement of filtering Internet content to block pornographic material)
- Measures to hold users accountable for online activities
(description of consequences for inappropriate use)
- Provide Internet safety instruction
(explicit declaration of Internet safety instruction provides for students)
- Encourage parent engagement in the digital citizenship process
(involve parents in all stages of the training process)

146 LEAs and special school districts have acceptable use policies for Internet and network resource utilization publicly available via the web. The following districts have exemplary acceptable use policies available publicly online:

- **Claiborne County:** This policy specifically mentions a process for annual review and revision. Additionally, the policy mandates integration of Internet safety in curriculum and instruction across all grade levels. Claiborne also outlines a plan for outreach to external stakeholders such as parents and community members.
- **Clinton City:** This policy specifically addresses Internet safety instruction and social networking.
- **Davidson County/MNPS:** MNPS's technology acceptable use policy does not follow the TSBA template. Their policy is much more detailed and comprehensive in scope. Their policy is far more extensive and includes issues of misuse, education of proper use, social media, and use of personal technology (BYOD-Bring Your Own Device).
- **Franklin County:** The policy uses the same expanded template as Claiborne County.

- **Trenton SSD:** This is the ideal, comprehensive acceptable use policy. It addresses all areas of current student use of computing and network resources. They refer to the policy as “Electronic Device/Internet/Internet Safety Acceptable Use” acknowledging areas such as social networking, network security, and virus protection. The expanded language creates a contract of acceptable use of technology engagement with the school. This is an excellent example of how to create this policy.

Based upon an evaluation of the of the available acceptable use policies, future guidance to districts will focus on filtering, accountability and Internet safety instruction. Board policies templates should be altered to better address social media and emerging technology communication issues. Many of the policies lacked appropriate language to address these sectors.

Additionally, acceptable use and general school board policies addressing school-owned devices, personal-owned devices, network resource utilization and social media use will be needed to provide appropriate guidance as classrooms converge to technology-enhanced learning and online assessment models.