



# The Pomfret School

*CHALLENGING THE MIND ★ ENCOURAGING THE HEART*

## **Software Filtering Policy**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of The Pomfret School to use electronic resources to support and enrich the curriculum, taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students. The Board recognizes the importance of minimizing potential risk of exposure to inappropriate materials and to provide instruction about acceptable use of electronic resources, which may include privacy rights, intellectual property, copyright infringement and plagiarism by students. Therefore, the use of all such electronic resources shall be consistent with related district adopted policies and administrative procedures. The school district may place restrictions on the materials accessed or shared on the school's electronic equipment, Intranet system as well as the Internet.

The Board believes that the benefits to students from access to information through electronic resources and opportunities for expanded collaboration far exceed the potential risks and disadvantages.

The school shall take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of students when they access Internet resource materials by utilizing strategies that may include Internet filtering to block material deemed harmful to minors, network monitoring software, education portals, and age-appropriate staff supervision.

### **General Information**

In the past, instructional and library media materials could usually be screened - prior to use - by committees of staff and community members, and evaluated based on selection criteria. Even with the use of Internet filters, network firewalls, education portals, and direct staff supervision, District staff and administrators can no longer guarantee students will be protected from gaining access to inappropriate electronic materials, as electronic resources may not have been screened prior to their use by students. Consequently, staff shall collaborate with parents and guardians of minors to articulate and disseminate the standards that children shall follow when using electronic resources.

### **Student Expectations**

Students are expected to follow the rules of personal conduct outlined in the student handbook, as well as abide by state and federal laws in the use of the District's electronic resources.

### **Disclaimer of Liability**

District staff shall provide basic instruction to students on appropriate use of electronic resources and the Internet but shall not be liable for students' unacceptable use or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the Internet.

The District makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the District system will be error-free or without defect. The District shall not be responsible for any damage experienced, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.

<u>Unit:</u>	<u>Board of:</u>	<u>Warned</u>	<u>Adopted</u>	<u>Re-warned:</u>	<u>Re-adopted</u>
Pomfret		11/8/01	12/13/01		