



TIGARD-TUALATIN SCHOOL DISTRICT INTERNET FILTERING POLICY

Our district's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) states that our electronic network has been established for educational use only, including support of administrative and student services, student and staff research, lesson planning, collaboration and sharing of ideas, contact with subject-area experts, and the downloading of materials to be used as classroom resources. Selection of Internet sites is covered by the same set of selection guidelines that are used to select books, magazines, software, and other library materials (Board Policy IIAC "Library Materials Selection and Adoption" available online at <http://www.ttsd.k12.or.us/boardwebsite> under "Board Policies").

Filtering or blocking of Internet sites on the Tigard-Tualatin School District (TTSD) network will be implemented for two reasons:

- 1) To respond to the need to meet federal requirements, such as CIPA. CIPA stands for **Children's Internet Protection Act**, and is a federal law that requires schools to protect students from inappropriate content on the Internet. Failure to comply with CIPA risks the district's E-Rate funding from the federal government.
- 2) To address other, in-district, concerns regarding network security, use of bandwidth, copyright law, and support of district educational goals and curriculum.

Based on these two reasons, certain Internet sites *may not* be accessed through the TTSD network. Some categories of sites may be completely filtered or blocked out, others may be selectively blocked out, depending on their educational or curricular application.

Completely blocked:

- Sites containing pornography (as defined by federal law)– these are inappropriate for use at school.
- Non-district sponsored chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications – currently, there is no curriculum application and the school is unable to assure safety of students using the these services. Some of these services are disruptive of educational process when school is in session.
- Gambling sites – currently, there is no educational or curriculum application. Disruptive to the educational process.
- Proxy avoidance sites – the use of these sites violates district AUP because they allow the proxy filter to be bypassed.
- Hacking sites – Hacking, as defined in the district’s *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*, violates the AUP and district Electronic Communications Policy. (IIGBA)

Federal and state law, as well as board policy require that schools take responsibility for guarding the safety of children who are using the Internet at school. Blocking sites will be done very carefully, selectively, and will take into account material appropriate at different grade levels.

Selectively blocked:

- Sites advocating violence or hate against any person or group of people
- Sites explaining how to construct and use weapons
- Sites that explain how to obtain, manufacture, or use illegal drugs
- Download sites —Staff and students may download files for educational purposes from sites where the files are in the public domain or the author/creator of the work specifically gives permission for the download. All U.S. copyright laws will be observed; therefore, sites that allow illegal downloads of files such as MP3, video, software, photos, etc. will be blocked. Sites may also be blocked if they create excessive demands on network resources.
- Game sites – Educational games offer unique ways for students to learn about and experiment with complex concepts. Staff and students are encouraged to use these sites both in and out of the classroom. Non-educational games are inappropriate for use at school and may be blocked.
- E-mail – e-mail coming into the district will be filtered for spam, viruses and content inappropriate to an educational setting.
- Sites that do not meet TTSD materials selection policy guidelines

Review Process

The technology of Internet filtering software is not perfect. Both “over blocking” and “under blocking” can occur. Some sites can get blocked even though they do not violate either CIPA guidelines or the District’s Acceptable Use Policy.

Students and staff may need access to sites that deal with controversial issues for legitimate research and educational purposes. For example, a breast cancer site might be blocked because it contains the word “breast.” On the other hand, sites that *do* violate the policies may slip through the filter process. For example, a site may contain pornographic pictures but the text might consist of a patriotic tribute to our troops in Afghanistan, so the filtering software does not detect the actual content of the site.

Process to request block of inappropriate site:

1. Staff should make students aware of their responsibility to report inappropriate sites to a staff member.
2. Submit requests for blocking sites by sending email to the network administrator at filter@tsd.k12.or.us. This email needs to include the complete URL of the inappropriate site and a brief reason why it should be blocked.

Process to request removal of a block:

1. Staff should contact the media specialist for assistance in previewing.
2. Media Specialist should send requests for removing a block by sending email to the network administrator at filter@tsd.k12.or.us. This email needs to include the complete URL of the site and a brief reason why the block should be removed.

Further Review

Beyond the technological issues of the filtering software, there may also be philosophical disagreements about whether a site is appropriate for school use or not. If there is a question about whether a site should be blocked or unblocked, a committee composed of the following representatives: library media specialists (2), administrator (1), Information Technology (1), teachers (2), parents (3), will evaluate the site in terms of our district’s materials selection policy and make a recommendation.