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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Paul O. Burns, Ed.D.

DATE: September 1, 2023

SUBJECT: **New State Board of Education Rule Regarding Requirements for District Internet Safety Policies**

Contact Information:

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On July 19, 2023, the State Board of Education adopted Rule 6A-1.0957, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), Internet Safety Policy. The purpose of this rule is to set forth requirements for internet safety policies that must be adopted by school districts and charter school governing boards. Each district's initial Internet Safety Policy must be in place by September 1, 2023.

Below is the entire rule language as adopted:

6A-1.0957 Internet Safety Policy.

(1) Purpose. The purpose of this rule is to set forth requirements for internet safety policies that must be adopted by school districts and charter school governing boards.

(2) Internet Safety Policy.

(a) By September 1 of each year, each district school board and charter school governing board must adopt an internet safety policy for student internet use that applies to all devices owned or provided by a district or school, or any device (including privately owned) connected to district- or school-provided internet. This policy must be reviewed and approved annually by the school board or governing board.

(b) In developing a student internet safety policy, district school boards and governing boards must review whether the Children's Internet Protection Act, 47 C.F.R. § 54.520, applies and, if so, ensure compliance with CIPA.

(c) Student internet safety policies must, at a minimum:

1. Require the use of technology protection measures to filter or block access to material that is not appropriate for students, taking into consideration the subject matter and the age of the students served at each school;

2. Protect the safety and security of students when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;

3. Require the use of technology protection measures to prevent hacking or unauthorized access by students to data or information that they should not have access to, and to prohibit other unlawful online activities by students;

4. Prevents access to websites, web or mobile applications, or software that do not protect against the disclosure, use, or dissemination of students' personal information in accordance with rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C.; and

5. Prohibits students from accessing social media platforms, except when expressly directed by a teacher for an educational purpose.

(d) Prior to requiring students to use online content, policies must require staff to confirm the content is not blocked by the student internet filter. Policies must provide a process for staff to request that blocked content or social media platforms to be reviewed and unblocked for educational purposes.

(3) TikTok. School districts and charter school governing boards must:

(a) Prohibit the use of TikTok, and any successor platforms, on all district- or school-owned devices, or on any device (including privately owned) connected to district- or school-provided internet; and

(b) Prohibit the use of TikTok, or any successor platforms, to be used to communicate or promote any school district, school, school-sponsored club, extracurricular organization, or athletic team.

Thank you for your quick attention and compliance with the above rule.

PB/as