Book	Policy Manual
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BRICK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy

	Monitored
	Mandated
X	Other Reasons

PUBLICATIONS

The Brick Township Board of Education sponsors pupil publications as important elements of the instructional program. Pupils are encouraged to develop skills of written and verbal communication and to exercise the right to express their opinions freely and responsibly.

The rights of free speech, and free expression of pupils in public schools pursuant to the First Amendment, are not automatically coextensive with the rights of adults in other settings and shall be applied in light of the special characteristics of the school environment. The board of education reserves the right to exercise prepublication control over school sponsored publications through administrative staff and faculty. Pupils shall have the right to appeal the exercise of censorship by school district staff to the board of education.

Pupil expression may be restricted, if it can be determined that such expression is inconsistent with the basic educational mission of the school district and when censorship action is reasonably related to legitimate educational concerns.

Pupils who violate this policy by expression, publication or distribution of any materials which are biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, unsuitable for immature audiences, or which do not meet the school district's high standards of learning and propriety consistent with its educational goals and objectives may be subject to appropriate discipline.

This policy shall be implemented in accordance with regulations to be developed by the superintendent. The regulations shall:

  A. Identify school district staff responsible for pupil publications;

  B. Establish procedures for prepublication review; and

  C. Specify procedures for appeal by pupils to the board of education with provisions for prompt decisions to be made at each level.

<u>Websites</u>

The Brick Township Board of Education believes that because there is world-wide accessibility to the Internet and Internet publications of this district any material posted on the district's website must reflect the high educational standards of the Brick Township School district.

The availability of Internet access throughout the school district provides an opportunity for students and staff to contribute to and participate in this global learning environment. The district's websites provide open access public information about curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, and other general information relating to the individual schools' as well as the district's mission. All published pages and corresponding links stored on the district's servers must be related to the district's educational goals and objectives or school-sponsored activities.

The district webmaster and the district technology coordinator will provide Internet access for the creation of webpages. Staff members creating webpages should familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, the policies and responsibilities that follow. Failure to follow these policies or responsibilities may result in the loss of authoring privileges and/or other more stringent disciplinary measures.

<u>Content Standards</u>

The superintendent, with input from the webmaster and the technology coordinator, shall be responsible for webpage approval.

<u>Subject Matter</u>

All subject matter on webpages should relate to curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, general information that is appropriate and of interest to others, and the school district. Neither staff nor students may publish personal webpages or homepages of other individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the school district website.

Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity.

<u>Quality</u>

All webpages must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Documents may not contain objectionable material or point (link) directly to objectionable material. Objectionable material is defined as material that does not meet the standards for instructional resources specified in the school district policies including but not limited to profane or obscene language, content promoting violations of board policy or law, content that is poorly researched and/or inaccurate.

The webmaster, technology coordinator, and district administrators shall be responsible for determining and approving the question quality or propriety of webpage material, appearance, and/or content prior to publication.

<u>Ownership and Retention</u>

All webpages on the district's servers are the property of the school district. Official district webpages will reside only on district owned or operated servers. The only organization permitted to post a webpage on the district server is the PTA. Other webpages for school connected organizations may be linked on the district website with the approval of the superintendent.

<u>Student Safeguards</u>

Students may publish information on the school district webserver only when they are under the supervision of the webmaster, technology coordinator or teacher. The district shall not publish any personally identifiable information about a student without prior written consent from the student's parents/guardians or the adult student.
Publications shall <u>not </u>contain:

  A. Webpage documents that include student names;

  B. Documents that include a student's telephone number, address, names of other family members, or names of friends;

  C. Personal email addresses. Published email addresses are restricted to those of staff members or to general group email address where arriving email is forwarded to a staff member;

  D. Student pictures (video or still) and audio clips unless parent/guardian consent is specifically obtained for this purpose;

E. Webpage documents that include any information that indicates the physical location of a student at a given time.

School Board Policies

All documents on school district servers must conform to the board of education policies and regulations as well as established school guidelines. Persons developing or maintaining web documents are responsible for complying with these policies. Some of the relevant issues and related board policies include the following:

A. Electronic transmission of materials is a form of copying. As specified in district policy, no unlawful copies of copyrighted materials may be knowingly produced or transmitted via the district's equipment, including its web servers;

B. Documents created for the web and linked to district webpages will meet the criteria for use as an instructional resource;

C. Any links to district webpages that are not specifically curriculum-related will meet the criteria established in board policy 6142.10 Internet Safety and Technology. Any other non-curricular materials should be limited to information about other youth activities, agencies, or organizations that are known to be non-sectarian, exclusively devoted to community interests or child welfare, non-profit, and nondiscriminatory. Webpage links may not include entities whose primary purpose is commercial or political advertising;

D. All communications via district webpages will comply with board policies 6142.10 Internet Safety and Technology and 5131 Conduct and Discipline. Offensive behavior that is expressly prohibited by this policy includes biased or discriminatory behavior and sexual harassment and/or violence;

E. Any student information communicated via district webpages must comply with the board policies on data privacy and public use of school records (3570 Records and Reports, 4112.6/4212.6 Personnel Records and 125 Student Records);

F. Any deliberate tampering with or misuse of district networked services or equipment will be considered vandalism and will be handled in accordance with the 6142.10 Internet Safety and Technology and 5131 Conduct and Discipline and other related policies.

Technical Standards and Consistency

Each webpage added to the district website must contain the following elements in order to provide general consistency for district webpages:

A. At the bottom of the webpage, there must be a last update indicator and the name or initials of the person(s) responsible for the page and/or update. It shall be that person's responsibility to keep the webpage current;

B. At the bottom of the webpage, there must be a link that returns the user to the appropriate point(s) in the district webpage;

C. The district will develop additional consistency standards as the need arises;

D. All webpages must be submitted to the webmaster for review prior to placement on the district server(s). in the absence of the district webmaster, the computer/technology coordinator or superintendent shall give approval;

E. No computers other than the assigned building web servers shall be configured as web/FTP servers;

F. Users must exhibit care when creating webpages with extensive tiled backgrounds or large graphics. Such files require extensive download time, are frustrating for modem users, and slow down the file servers;

G. The authorized teacher, who is publishing the final webpages for himself/herself or for a student, will edit the pages for conformance with the standards outlined in this policy and test the pages for the accuracy of the links;

H. Webpages may not contain links to other webpages not yet completed. If additional pages are anticipated but not yet developed, the text that will provide such a link should be included. However, the actual link to said pages might not be made until the final page is actually in place on the servers;

I. Any graphics, sounds, or video used on webpages must conform to the format currently used or approved by the administration;

J. Webpages may not contain any student email address links, any survey-response links or any other type of direct-response links;

K. Final decisions regarding access to active webpages for editing content of organization will rest with the superintendent, with input from the webmaster and/or technology coordinator;

L. All webpages shall be linked to other district pages in relation to their current location on the servers.

<u>Implementation</u>

Material on webpages, approved for publication on the district website, reflect the thoughts, interests, and ideas of the individual writer/poster. Such webpages may not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the individual schools or the school. Concern about the content of any pages created by students or staff should be directed to the superintendent or to the district webmaster.

The district technology coordinator and webmaster will review this policy regularly and recommend changes as necessary through the superintendent.

<u>Key Words</u>

Publications, Student Publications

Legal

N.J.S.A. 18A 11-1: General mandatory powers and duties

N.J.S.A. 18A 36-35 Disclosure of certain student information on Internet prohibited without parental consent

N.J.S.A. 18A 54-20: Powers of board

N.J.A.C. 6A 8-3.1 Curriculum and instruction

Bethel School District No. 403, v. Fraser

Desilets v. Clearview Regional Board of Education, 137 N.J. 585 (1994)

Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)

Last Modified by Sandra Beyer on July 11, 2018