

2016 -- S 2172 SUBSTITUTE A

LC003225/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Introduced By: Senators Satchell, Metts, Pichardo, Sheehan, and Archambault

Date Introduced: January 27, 2016

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended  
2 by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 21.6

4 INTERNET FILTERING IN SCHOOLS

5 **16-21.6-1. Internet filtering.** -- (a) "Internet filtering measures" means the use of a  
6 specific technology or program to block or filter access to websites on the internet.

7 (b) Each school district shall adopt the model written policy developed by the department  
8 of education pursuant to subsection (e) of this section addressing the use of internet filtering  
9 measures for computer access in its schools. Any such policy shall:

10 (1) Include the specific categories of websites that are blocked by the internet filtering  
11 measures in use; the basis for including those categories; and the individuals who are responsible  
12 for making those decisions;

13 (2) Establish a procedure for teachers to request that a blocked website be unblocked in a  
14 timely manner; and

15 (3) Specify the criteria used for overruling a request to allow access to a website that is  
16 blocked by the internet filtering measures, and require that the teacher making such a request be  
17 provided particular reasons any time a request is denied.

18 (c) Each school district shall maintain a public record of any requests to allow access to a  
19 website that is blocked by the internet filtering measures and the response provided, and submit

1 an annual report to the school committee on the number of requests granted and denied to  
2 unblock a website.

3 (d) Each school district shall annually review the requests made in the preceding year  
4 pursuant to subsection (b)(2) of this section for unblocking websites in order to determine  
5 whether the categories and standards contained in the policy adopted pursuant to subsection  
6 (b)(1) of this section shall be revised.

7 (e) The Rhode Island department of education shall develop a written model internet  
8 filtering policy for use by school districts, state schools, charter schools, and mayoral academies.  
9 The model plan shall include, but not be limited to, the provisions contained in subsections (b)(1)  
10 (b)(2) and (b)(3) of this section, and to the extent consistent with federal law, promote academic  
11 freedom in the classroom, and shall be communicated to all school districts in the state for their  
12 use and posted on the department website.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

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1           This act would mandate that each school district adopt the model written policy  
2 developed by the department of education that addresses the use of internet filtering measures for  
3 computer access in schools. The Rhode Island department of education would be required to  
4 develop and post this model written policy for use by all school districts including state schools,  
5 charter schools and mayoral academies consistent with federal law contained on the department's  
6 website.

7           This act would take effect upon passage.

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