



**POLICY 8.125**

**5-B** I recommend that the Board approve development of the proposed new Policy 8.125, to be entitled “District Review and Filtering of Web Sites.”

[Contact: Judith Klinek, PX 43876.]

**Development**

**CONSENT ITEM**

- The District’s Sensitive Topics Committee was involved in drafting this proposed new Policy with input from Information Technology.
- The Policy sets forth procedures and standards for review and filtering of Web sites, and requests for blocking or unblocking sites, pursuant to the standards set forth in the Web Site Review checklist, form PBSB 2247.

POLICY 8.125

DISTRICT REVIEW AND FILTERING OF WEB SITES

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2  
3 1. With input from the School District of Palm Beach County's Information  
4 Technology (IT) Department, the District will purchase and use a filter to  
5 determine the appropriateness of web sites to be viewed by students and District  
6 employees. Criteria used to select the filter and provider of the filter will be based  
7 upon: budgetary considerations, security, research on industry standards,  
8 product reviews, other school districts' filtering requirements and evaluation,  
9 outcome of a live demonstration, the accuracy of the filter's categories to  
10 minimize false positives, and effectiveness in filtering compatibility with current  
11 District technology as well as any purchasing criteria required by School Board  
12 Policy 6.14 (Purchasing Department) and the State Board of Education within  
13 SBER 6A-1.012.  
14
- 15 2. IT shall utilize filters, firewalls, and other technology devices to attempt to block  
16 any Web-transmitted malware, including but not limited to malicious software,  
17 spam, viruses, worms, spyware, and adware, and to disallow any attempts to  
18 circumvent these devices.  
19
- 20 3. Standards for determining what Web sites will attempt to be blocked through the  
21 use of the filter, as implemented by the District's IT department, are set forth on  
22 the Website Review checklist, form PBSB 2247, which is incorporated herein by  
23 reference. The form can also be accessed on the District's web site at:  
24 <http://itsecurity.palmbeach.k12.fl.us>. The filtering provider's categories for  
25 classifying web sites, however, may be broader than the areas listed within the  
26 checklist. As a result, the filter may block some Web sites not meeting the  
27 standards within the checklist; but requests may be made to unblock those sites  
28 by following the procedures within Section (5) below.  
29
- 30 4. IT shall also consider the intended recipient in determining whether a site is to be  
31 blocked by the filter for a particular group.  
32
- 33 5. Specific requests for whether a Web site should be blocked or unblocked may be  
34 made to IT by District employees. Employees can e-mail their request to  
35 [blocked@palmbeach.k12.fl.us](mailto:blocked@palmbeach.k12.fl.us) and state the link to the requested Web site,  
36 whether it should be blocked or unblocked, and the reason, if known. Requests  
37 from schools must come through the Principal. Students and staff members may  
38 make requests to the Principal anonymously. The Principal may review the

39 requested site and, based on the same criteria used by the IT Department--and  
40 none other--may choose not to forward the request to IT. If not forwarded, the  
41 review should be documented on the Website Review checklist and retained by  
42 the Principal, and the requester, if known, should be notified. Alternatively, the  
43 Principal may forward the request to IT for a more-detailed review. IT will, in a  
44 reasonable period of time, review the request using the aforementioned criteria  
45 and standards and complete the Website Review checklist to determine whether  
46 the site should be blocked or unblocked. After this review of a specific request,  
47 the site should not be blocked for any reason other than those within the  
48 checklist.

49  
50 6. If IT finds it difficult to assess the site using the criteria, the decision will be  
51 referred to the District's Sensitive Topics Committee. The Superintendent will  
52 select this Committee made up of representatives from middle and high school  
53 principals and academic departments, and the Committee may receive advice  
54 from IT and School Board counsel. This Committee will make the determination  
55 to block or unblock sites based only upon the aforementioned criteria included  
56 within the checklist.

57  
58 7. The District will promptly notify the requester, if known, of the decision to block or  
59 unblock a site. This decision by a Principal or IT may be appealed, in writing by  
60 the requester, to the Sensitive Topics Committee within 15 days of the decision.  
61 Decisions made by the Sensitive Topics Committee may be appealed by the  
62 requester, in writing within 15 days of the decision, to the Superintendent's  
63 designee. All appeals will be reviewed using only the same aforementioned  
64 criteria in the checklist. Appeal decisions will be rendered within 20 days of the  
65 receipt of the appeal and will be provided to the requester, if known.

66  
67 8. If a requester later demonstrates that relevant new information has been added  
68 or deleted from the Web site, the District will process, according to the above  
69 procedures, a new request to review a Web site previously reviewed.

70  
71 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.32 (2); 1001.41(1) & (2); 1001.42(4) &  
72 (23); 1001.43 (1), (3) & (6).

73 LAWS IMPLEMENTED: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.41 (1); 1001.42 (4) & (6); 1001.43(1) & (3);  
74 1002.31

75 RULE SUPPLEMENTED: SBER 6A-1.012.

76 HISTORY: \_\_/\_\_\_2007

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed proposed Policy 8.125 and finds it legally sufficient for development by the Board.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) SECURITY**

## Website Review

Date Requested

Date Received

The purpose of this form is to document the review process (School Board Policy 8.125) initiated by IT Security, the Sensitive Topics Committee or the Superintendent's designee concerning blocking or unblocking websites. No criteria other than what appears in this checklist are to be used. Principals\* (for school staff) or District employees\* send an e-mail request to IT Security to review a website for the purpose of blocking or unblocking the site for District use. The Website review (PBSD 2247) is completed by IT Security, the Sensitive Topics Committee or the Superintendent's designees in order to determine if a site is to be blocked or unblocked. This review will be sent to the requesting principal or District staff to inform the requester of the final website review decision.

Website address (URL)

\*Review requested by

Reviewed by

Review Date

### REASONS FOR WEBSITE BLOCK

Date website was blocked

The website is to be blocked for the following reasons (check all that apply)

- Website has access to pictures that are obscene, showing nudity, sexual acts, or harmful to minors; or allows students to disclose or disseminate personal information, E rate requirements of CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) and COPA (Child Online Protection Act).
- Website contains lewd, lascivious, vulgar, obscene or plainly offensive materials.
- Website has access to chat rooms, instant messaging, peer-to-peer, social networking, blogs, guest books, dating services, e-mail capabilities and/or games.
- Website contains excessive violence, promotes hate, violence or racism, or encourages illegal activity.
- Website materially and substantially interfere[s] with the work of the school or infringe[s] upon the rights of other students.
- Website has no educational value.
- Website could impair or compromise the security or performance of the District's information system.
- Age inappropriate for intended recipient

### REASONS FOR WEBSITE UNBLOCK

Date website was unblocked

- Website has educational value.

Other reasons