



Ethical Uses of Technology in the K-12 Curriculum

As a group look at the following items and collaborate on the answers. Select one person to be responsible for recording the group's responses.

- 1. Review the Bellingham [Washington] Public Schools Parent Permission Form. What ethical issues does this form letter address?** <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/copyrule.htm>
- 2. Consider these scenarios and suggest some specific aspects of ethical uses of technology that they represent. What would you suggest that the teachers/administrators do in these situations?**
 - A. Nona Smiley has taught freshman English for thirty years. She is an overpowering woman who for most of her teaching career has had few discipline problems. However, lately students have not been nearly as respectful. During a recent test over Henry David Thoreau's essay on *Civil Disobedience*, Ms. Smiley caught Otis Underachiever cheating on a test. When confronted, Otis muttered several obscenities under his breath, but loudly enough for the entire class to hear. Ms. Smiley immediately sent him to the school office. Otis is intelligent and has a great deal of artistic talent. Venting his frustration, Otis drew a caricature of Ms. Smiley that truly captured the essence of how Otis feels about her. He posted this caricature, along with a few well-chosen words about Thoreau, on his personal homepage and e-mailed all of his friends to tell them what he had done. Of course, word spread like wildfire and by the next day, the incident was the talk of the school. Ms. Smiley and her principal are not amused.
 - B. The new high school principal Douglas Dorite has insisted that all teachers submit detailed lesson plans that include copies of all handouts used in their classes as well as the ratings of any videotapes to be used. Susan Strange, a new teacher at the school, wants to use an article in her senior classes that she downloaded from the Web and has used successfully in other schools for years. However, the title contains a four-letter word, and she is not sure how Dr. Dorite will feel about this. The social studies teacher, Frank Lee Lazlier, has five episodes of a mini-series set during the Civil War that he videotaped during the summer. He isn't sure how the series would be rated due to the violence. Both teachers decide to submit their plans as is and see what Dr. Dorite will do with them.
 - C. The science teacher Richard Petri is teaching a distance learning class in general science. The Environmental Protection Agency has an excellent videotape showing the devastation caused by the eruption of Mount St. Helen that he plans

- to show during the next class session provided the equipment works properly. He also plans to show some photographs from the 1980 edition of *National Geographic* that covered the eruption. He has scanned these photographs and converted them to a digital format. Students will be able to get the digital files from his Web page and upload them to their computers so they can have them to review during the semester. So that his students will get to know each other better, Richard has asked each one to e-mail him a digital picture of himself/herself which he plans to put on the class Web page.
- D. Donna Darling, the school's guidance counselor, has been upset since her principal reprimanded by her for not following the dress code. She and six other teachers who feel the principal is not the right man for the job have been conducting an e-mail campaign lobbying for support of a woman candidate for the school board who feels similarly to the teachers. The school board is split regarding their feelings about this principal. These teachers feel that if this particular candidate gets elected to the school board, they have a chance of having their complaints heard, and perhaps he will be removed from his position. The business education teacher also created some flyers in support of their candidate and put one in each teacher's mailbox. The election is next week.
- E. The *National Educational Technology Standards for Students* have six broad categories. The second of these categories is labeled "Social, ethical, and human issues." Specific standards relating to ethics for each age division are as follows:

Pre K-2

#5 Work cooperatively and collaboratively with peers, family members, and others when using technology in the classroom.

#6 Demonstrate positive social and ethical behaviors when using technology.

#7 Practice responsible use of technology systems and software.

Grades 3 – 5

#2 Discuss common uses of technology in daily life and the advantages and disadvantages those uses provide.

#3 Discuss basic issues related to responsible use of technology and information and describe personal consequences of inappropriate use.



Grades 6 – 8

#2 Demonstrate knowledge of current changes in information technologies and the effect those changes have on the workplace and society.

#3 Exhibit legal and ethical behaviors when using information and technology, and discuss consequences of misuse.

#10 Research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information sources concerning real-world problems.

Grades 9 – 12

#1 Identify capabilities and limitations of contemporary and emerging technology resources and assess the potential of these systems and services to address personal, lifelong learning, and workplace needs.

#2 Make informed choices among technology systems, resources, and services.

#3 Analyze advantages and disadvantages of widespread use and reliance on technology in the workplace and in society as a whole.

#4 Demonstrate and advocate legal and ethical behaviors among peers, family, and community regarding the use of technology and information.

Do you think there are ways that you can address these standards in your classroom? If your answer is “yes,” give examples of how you would do so. If your answer is “no,” explain why you think you cannot.