

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 48

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-70.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to student instruction; internet safety; certain topics.

[H 171]

Approved April 2, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-70.2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-70.2. Acceptable internet use policies for public and private schools.

A. Every two years, each local school board shall review, amend if necessary, and approve the school division's acceptable use policy for the ~~Internet~~ internet. At a minimum, the policy shall contain provisions that (i) are designed to prohibit use by division employees and students of the division's computer equipment and communications services for sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading illegal material via the ~~Internet~~ internet; (ii) seek to prevent access by students to material that the school division deems to be harmful to juveniles as defined in § 18.2-390; (iii) select a technology for the division's computers having ~~Internet~~ internet access to filter or block ~~Internet~~ internet access through such computers to child pornography as set out in § 18.2-374.1:1 and obscenity as defined in § 18.2-372; (iv) establish appropriate measures to be taken against persons who violate the policy; and (v) include a component on ~~Internet~~ internet safety for students that is integrated in a division's instructional program *that includes instruction on key modern digital safety topics, including online scams, misinformation, and content generated by artificial intelligence*. The policy may include such other terms, conditions, and requirements as deemed appropriate, such as requiring written parental authorization for ~~Internet~~ internet use by juveniles or differentiating acceptable uses among elementary, middle, and high school students.

Each school division's policy shall be posted on its website in accordance with § 22.1-253.13:7. Additionally, each local school division shall certify compliance with these requirements annually to the Department of Education.

B. The superintendent shall take such steps as he deems appropriate to implement and enforce the division's policy.

C. In addition to the foregoing requirements regarding public school ~~Internet~~ internet use policies, the principal or other chief administrator of any private school that satisfies the compulsory school attendance law pursuant to § 22.1-254 and accepts federal funds for ~~Internet~~ internet access shall select a technology for its computers having ~~Internet~~ internet access to filter or block ~~Internet~~ internet access through such computers to child pornography as set out in § 18.2-374.1:1 and obscenity as defined in § 18.2-372.

D. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall issue guidelines to school divisions regarding instructional programs related to ~~Internet~~ internet safety *that includes guidance on the topics specified in clause (v) of subsection A*.