



Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

IIBGA-Electronic Communications System

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that MESD's electronic communication systems are used safely, appropriately, and legally by all staff and students; to meet federal requirements under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA); and to establish expectations, protections, and disciplinary consequences for misuse of technology. It also outlines responsibilities for safeguarding student information and managing personal devices used for MESD work.

What is your experience with this policy:

Our experience with this policy is ongoing and operational. It guides how staff and students access the MESD electronic communication system, and supports compliance with federal CIPA requirements. The policy is invoked whenever technology is used for instruction, communication, or data access. Most of the experience centers on maintaining safe internet filters, monitoring systems for minors, and training staff on acceptable use. When violations occur, they typically involve misuse of technology or inappropriate online behavior, and the policy provides clear disciplinary pathways. Overall, it is used frequently as part of daily technology operations.



**What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families?
What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students
and their families?Is this policy:**

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

Yes, this policy is included in student and staff onboarding materials, student handbooks, intake packets, and annual training to ensure all parties understand student rights, responsibilities, and conduct expectations.

Clear and easy to understand?

The overall purpose is clear, but the policy is long, uses dense legal language, and includes repeated or outdated terminology. Some sentences are overly complex, and CIPA-related requirements appear in a list that may overwhelm users. With modernized language, more concise phrasing, and clearer structure, it would be far easier for staff, students, and families to understand.



People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

Positive impacts:

- Protects students from harmful online content.
- Ensures a safer digital learning environment.
- Provides clear boundaries and expectations for using MESD technology.
- Helps protect sensitive student and staff data.
- Aligns with state and federal privacy and safety laws.

Negative impacts:

- Content filtering can unintentionally block access to legitimate instructional materials.
- Heavy monitoring may create a sense of surveillance for students and staff.
- Strict disciplinary language may feel punitive, especially for minor or unintentional violations.
- Complex language may limit understanding among younger students, multilingual families, or staff with limited tech vocabulary.

Potential barriers:

- Unequal access to training (especially for substitutes, new employees, itinerant staff).
- Varying levels of digital literacy may affect understanding of safe and appropriate use.
- Students and families may not fully understand privacy limitations or monitoring practices.
- Staff using personal devices may encounter unclear expectations around data security.

Barriers reduced:

- Reduces risk of exposure to harmful online content.
- Mitigates cybersecurity threats by setting clear limits on access and behavior.
- Creates structured safeguards for minors across all MESD schools and programs.



Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

The policy applies universally, but potential impacts may differ:

- Students of color may experience disproportionate disciplinary consequences if monitoring or enforcement is inconsistent with MESD equity commitments.
- Linguistically diverse families may not fully understand expectations without translated materials.
- Digital literacy disparities may cause uneven knowledge of appropriate online behavior and security requirements.

MESD does not currently have specific data on differential impacts. To understand this better, MESD could examine discipline data related to technology misuse, disaggregated by race/ethnicity; review access to training; and gather feedback from students and families.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

This policy was driven by federal mandates (CIPA), state law, and district operational needs. Communities affected—students, families, and staff—were not directly involved in development or implementation planning.



What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy reflects MESD's commitments to:

- Student online safety.
- Compliance with federal and state technology protection laws.
- Responsible use of technology for teaching and learning.
- Data privacy and security for all MESD users.
- Consistent enforcement of acceptable use expectations.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

Positive environment:

- A safer digital learning space free from harmful or inappropriate content.
- Clear expectations that support responsible digital citizenship.
- Strong protections for student and staff data.

Negative environment:

- May feel overly punitive due to disciplinary language ("will result in discipline," "up to and including dismissal/expulsion").
- Monitoring and filtering may feel intrusive or authoritarian.
- Dense legal text may create barriers to understanding.

Barriers to equitable outcomes include differences in digital literacy, the complexity of the policy language, and the potential for disproportionate discipline if enforcement is



not applied consistently across student groups. Linguistically diverse families and younger students may struggle to understand expectations without accessible communication. Staff who use personal devices may find data security rules unclear, leading to uneven compliance. The monitoring and filtering systems required by CIPA may unintentionally restrict access to culturally relevant resources or legitimate educational content, creating additional barriers for some students.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy is dictated largely by federal CIPA requirements, district-level technology needs, and legal considerations. Students and families who are most affected by content filtering and monitoring were not intentionally involved in shaping the policy or its implementation.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?



The policy primarily maintains existing disparities, as it focuses on safety and compliance rather than equity. Potential unintended consequences include disproportionate disciplinary outcomes for students of color, reduced access to legitimate instructional materials due to filtering, and unequal understanding of digital expectations across different student groups. Without careful implementation and communication, these consequences could reinforce existing inequities.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Negative impacts can be reduced by ensuring accessible training for students and staff, translating expectations for families, reviewing discipline data for disproportionality, and providing regular guidance about safe and appropriate online behavior. IT and instructional staff can work together to refine filtering settings, minimize overblocking, and support culturally responsive implementation. Clearer, simpler language and consistent communication will help all users understand expectations and reduce violations.