



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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October 31, 2025

The Honorable Sam Rasoul
Chair, House Education Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 910
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Ghazala F. Hashmi
Chair, Senate Education and Health Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 616
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Chairs Rasoul and Hashmi:

I am pleased to submit the report of the Internet Safety Advisory Council's progress in accordance with Enactment Clause 3 of [Chapter 436](#) of the 2025 Acts of Assembly. This report outlines the Council's review and update of the model policy, instructional practices, and resources originally developed under [Chapter 776](#) (2022 Acts of Assembly) and its use of these materials to develop updated guidelines, recommendations, and a dedicated webpage to support internet safety in Virginia's public schools.

If you have questions or require additional information relating to this transmittal, please do not hesitate to contact Calypso Gilstrap, Executive Director, Office of Innovation, at 804-750-8708, or by email at Calypso.Gilstrap@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Anne Gullickson".

Emily Anne Gullickson, M.Ed. J.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

EAG/LMB/tm

c: The Honorable Aimee Rogstad Guidera
Virginia Secretary of Education

INTERNET SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chapter 436, Enactment Clause 3 (2025 Acts of Assembly)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

[Section 22.1-24.2](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, enacted by Chapter 436 (2025), directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish the Internet Safety Advisory Council to advance safe media and technology use in Virginia’s public schools. The Council’s responsibilities include:

- Reviewing and updating the model policy, instructional practices, and resources developed under Chapter 776 (2022 Acts of Assembly).
- Developing new guidelines and model instructional practices for safe media and technology use.
- Creating and maintaining a webpage with curated resources for educators and school divisions.

This report is made pursuant to Enactment Clause 3 of [Chapter 436](#) of the 2025 Acts of Assembly that provides:

The Internet Safety Advisory Council shall submit to the Board of Education and the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education no later than October 31, 2025, a report on its progress that details its review of updates to such materials set forth in clause (i) and its use of such updated materials in developing the guidelines, recommendations, and webpage relating to Internet safety best practices, model instructional practices, and model policies pursuant to the provisions of this act.”

REVIEW AND USE OF UPDATED MATERIALS PURSUANT TO CLAUSE (I)

In accordance with [§ 22.1-24.2](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and the directive set forth in Chapter 436 of the 2025 Acts of Assembly, the Internet Safety Advisory Council conducted a comprehensive review and update of the model policy, instructional practices, and supporting resources originally developed under Chapter 776 (2022 Acts of Assembly).

In 2024, the Board of Education (the Board) adopted the [Model Policy Concerning Internet Safety](#) along with accompanying instructional practices and content. The motion included a provision for ongoing review to ensure the policy remains responsive to emerging digital threats and evolving instructional needs. These materials were disseminated to all local school boards to support the implementation of robust internet safety measures for students and educators.

The 2025 General Assembly further supported this work through the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 905, which formally reestablished the Internet Safety Advisory Council, and House Bill (HB) 2460, which incorporated media literacy and digital citizenship into the *Standards of Learning*. These legislative actions reinforced the integration of internet safety across instructional domains.

The Virginia Department of Education (the Department) provided regular updates through the *TeacherDirect* and *Virginia Education Update* newsletters.

Public comment was actively solicited through the Department’s website and during regional superintendent meetings. A broad coalition of stakeholders was invited to review and provide feedback on the revised policy, including:

- Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)
- Equality Virginia
- Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Taskforce – Bedford
- State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)
- Virginia American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- School Board Membership Alliance
- Virginia Association for Teaching, Learning, and Leading
- Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals
- Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals
- Virginia Association of School Librarians (VAASL)
- Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)
- Virginia School Boards Association
- Virginia Society of Technology Educators
- Virginia Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Voices for Virginia’s Children
- Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC)
- FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression)
- Children and Screens
- Virginia Teachers of the Year
- The Department’s Artificial Intelligence (AI) Advisory Committee

The revised 2025 model policy includes several critical updates:

- **Emerging Threats:** Addressing AI-generated misinformation, phishing, sextortion, and doxxing.
- **Accessibility:** Expanding language and accommodations to better support students with disabilities in digital environments. The policy emphasizes access to digital learning tools and internet safety instruction for all learners, in compliance with FERPA, COPPA, and Virginia’s Acceptable Use Policy. It also integrates accessible AI literacy and digital citizenship training to ensure students with diverse needs can participate fully and safely in technology-rich learning experiences.
- **Legal Compliance:** Aligning with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA), and Virginia’s Acceptable Use Policy requirements.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Application of the [Guidelines for a AI Integration throughout Education in the Commonwealth of Virginia](#) for use in schools, including defining authorized tools, protecting student data through Data Privacy Agreements (DPAs), and embedding AI literacy into academic content.
- **Professional Development:** Encouraging divisions to provide training on responsible AI use and cybersecurity, including phishing mitigation.
- **Foundational Training:** Requiring age-appropriate internet safety instruction for all students prior to internet access, aligned with Children’s Internet Protection Act’s (CIPA) E-Rate requirements and digital citizenship standards.

- **Instructional Roles:** Clarifying responsibilities among classroom teachers, school librarians, and Instructional Technology Resource Teachers (ITRTs) to ensure consistent, grade-appropriate delivery.
- **Legal Alignment:** Strengthening connections to anti-bullying, anti-discrimination, and other student protection laws.
- **Digital Wellness:** Recommending screen time guidelines for elementary schools, informed by medical standards, to promote healthy technology use.

Draft updates were approved by the Board on July 31, 2025. A statewide webinar was held on August 28, 2025, to introduce finalized materials and provide a walkthrough of the new [Internet Safety Resource Hub](#).

As part of the review process, outdated resources were removed and replaced with updated, high-quality materials, including:

- Common Sense Education’s revised K–12 curriculum;
- Cyber.org’s cybersecurity modules; and
- Virginia-developed modules on AI safety and digital wellness.

In alignment with HB2460, media literacy and digital citizenship have been defined and are incorporated into the draft Science *Standards of Learning*.

- Digital Citizenship: Promoting ethical behavior, empathy, and online accountability.
- Media Literacy: Teaching students to evaluate sources, detect bias, and identify misinformation.

USE OF UPDATED MATERIALS IN GUIDELINES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND WEBPAGE

To help educators seamlessly incorporate resources into their instruction, the Department has developed a suite of tools and supports:

- [Situational Awareness and Internet Safety](#) simulations are designed to be utilized in 7th Grade PE to foster safe and informed decision-making in digital environments. The simulations were built in collaboration with eMediaVA.
- [Sample Lesson Plans](#) (K–12) Ready-to-use lessons tailored for all grade levels, promoting hands-on engagement with digital learning and computer science concepts.
- Standards crosswalks for alignment between Digital Learning Integration *Standards of Learning*, Computer Science *Standards of Learning*, and core content areas to support interdisciplinary planning.
- [Instructional guides for Mathematics](#) which include strategies and examples for embedding DLI and CS into mathematics instruction, enhancing relevance and rigor.
- Professional development opportunities offered both in-person and virtually through conferences, school divisions, higher education institutions, and Virtual Virginia—ensuring flexible access to high-quality training.

The updated materials directly informed the development of new guidelines, model instructional practices, and the launch of a dedicated Internet Safety Resource Hub on the VDOE website in April 2025. The hub includes:

- News and announcements;
- Downloadable model policies and lesson plans; and
- Links to vetted instructional tools and resources.

This centralized platform ensures that educators, administrators, families, and local school boards have access to current, high-quality materials to support safe and responsible technology use in Virginia’s schools. Internet safety resources have seen strong engagement across platforms. The dedicated webpage received 1,098 unique visitors. Meanwhile, the GoOpenVA.org hub—featuring curated instructional materials aligned with the Model Policy— attracted 2,261 unique visitors, reflecting growing interest in digital citizenship and safe technology use among educators and school leaders. Among the available resources, the most frequently accessed topic is *Privacy and Sharing Personal Information*, followed closely by *Social Media and Communication*, underscoring the urgency of guiding students in managing their digital footprints and interactions responsibly.

INTERNET SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

Pursuant to SB 905 (2025), the Department has formally reestablished the Internet Safety Advisory Council (the Council). The Council serves as a strategic advisory body, guiding the development and implementation of statewide internet safety education initiatives.

The Council is composed of up to 12 appointed members who represent a diverse range of stakeholders, including educators, students, parents, technology experts, and public safety officials. The appointed members are:

- Calypso Gilstrap, Virginia Department of Education;
- Jake Goodwin, Student;
- Carmelita Seitz, International Society for Technology in Education;
- Deana Hubbell, Elementary Classroom Teacher;
- Gillian Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice Services;
- Jason Frost, Wired Human;
- Kelly Passek, School Librarian;
- Mychael Willon, Parent;
- Shannon Beck, Virginia Cyber Range;
- Lauren Ellenberger, School Counselor; and
- Daniel Vanover, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher.

Council meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM on the following Mondays: November 10, January 12, March 9, and May 11. These meetings will provide a forum for collaboration, policy development, and resource sharing among Council members.

CONCLUSION

The Council has met its statutory obligations by thoroughly reviewing and updating prior materials and using them to develop robust, accessible, and forward-looking resources.

Moving forward, the Department will continue collaborating with the Internet Safety Advisory Council to revise and expand these resources as needed in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, ensuring student safety online is imperative. These efforts ensure that Virginia's public schools are equipped to foster safe, informed, and responsible digital citizens.