POLICIES 312 AND 713

The Shrewsbury School Committee encourages the use of information technology to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. Information technology will be used to increase communication, enhance productivity, and assist students and staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills. The system/network will also be utilized to provide relevant school information to the community.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools is pleased to offer its students access to the Internet and other electronic networks. The advantages afforded by the rich, digital resources available today outweigh the disadvantages. However, it is important to realize that access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities for all involved.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools must comply with state and federal guidelines, which may have to be more restrictive. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protect Act (CIPA), the district employs the use of specialized filtering software that monitors Internet traffic and blocks inappropriate web sites.

The primary responsibility to students is their safety. Hence, as teachers use existing and new tools such as blogging, podcasting and other web interactive resources, the expectations are that all of these activities are extensions of our classrooms. Therefore the Shrewsbury Public Schools has developed and included Acceptable Use Policies in our student handbooks. In order to obtain access privileges, students and parents are required to sign-off on these handbooks, including a disclaimer that they understand and pledge to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy. Staff is required to sign the Employee Acceptable Use Agreement as part of the employee orientation program.

Because information technology is constantly changing, not all situations can be anticipated or addressed in a policy. The acceptable use policy will be reviewed annually with students by staff. All users are expected to understand and comply with both the "letter" and the "spirit" of this policy and show good judgment in their use of these resources. Violations of the agreement may result in disciplinary action.