Digital Citizenship Manual Project

**Copyright and Plagiarism**

**Copyright** – Copyright is “the legal right granted to an author, a composer, a playwright, a publisher, or a distributor to exclusive publication, production, sale, or distribution of a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work.”

Copyright laws are based on the belief that anyone who creates an original, tangible work deserves to be compensated for that work, that compensation encourages more creative works, and that society as a whole benefits from the creative efforts of its members. Copyright laws are designed to protect a creator’s right to be compensated and to control how his or her work is used.

A good rule of thumb for using copyrighted material, is when in doubt, ask permission. The fair use doctrine was created to allow the use of copyrighted works for classroom instruction. Many educators interpret this as freedom to use any copyrighted material as long as it for instructional purposes only. This is not completely true. There are four factors to consider if the material is of fair use:

1. The purpose and character of the use.
2. The nature of the copyrighted work.
3. The amount and substantiality of the portion used.
4. The effect of the use upon the potential market for the copyrighted work.

Guidelines for educators of what can be used fairly:

1. A single chapter from a book.
2. An excerpt from a work that combines language and illustrations, such as a children’s book, not exceeding two pages or 10 percent of the work, whichever is less.
3. A poem of 250 words or less or up to 250 words of a longer poem.
4. An article, short story, or essay of 2,500 words or less, or excerpts of up to 1,000 words or 10 percent of a longer work, whichever is less.
5. A single chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon, or picture from a book, periodical, or newspaper.

**Plagiarism** – Plagiarism is “reproducing any portion of a copyrighted work without permission”.

Teachers need to understand the causes of plagiarism and clearly discuss how to avoid making these mistakes. Educators should have several lessons on plagiarism before assigning any assignments that a student might plagiarize on. Here are some reasons a student may commit plagiarism:

1. Students may fear failure.
2. Students may have poor time management skills.
3. Students may view the course, or the assignment as unimportant.
4. Teachers may present students with assignments so generic that they may believe they are justified in looking for canned responses.
5. Instructors may fail to report cheating when it does occur.

Best practices for preventing plagiarism are:

1. Explain plagiarism and develop clear policies.
2. Improve the design and sequence of assignments.
3. Attend to sources and the use of reading.
4. Work on plagiarism responsibly.
5. Take appropriate disciplinary actions.

**Digital Access**

**Digital access** – Digital access refers to “full electronic participation in society” (Ribble, 2011). Information technology provides a platform that connects learners with a worldwide library of information and, importantly, with other learners, educators, and people who can contribute significantly to their education and development.

Although schools have been purchasing technologies for many years, ready access to Internet- connected technologies is not necessarily available to students at the time of learning need. School will need to decide their role in preparing students for a digital future. They will need to determine student access for using personal and classroom devices within the educational context.

Access to the digital world for some students is limited due to the nature of available interfaces. Decisions on digital access should include consideration of access to personally owned devices, to the Internet, to content, to specialized interfaces, and to school authority digital networking infrastructure.

Three important policies involving digital access:

1. Have a philosophic statement recognizing the fundamental role of pervasive connectedness and its influence on students and student learning.
2. Enable meaningful access by supporting equitable levels of student access, including students with specialized needs and students from low socio-economic groups.
3. Have policy parameters for guiding the use of personally owned devices.

Teachers should emphasize the rules and guidelines for accessing technology in the classroom to promote civic competence among their fellow students and connect the rules to respect, responsibility, and students’ rights in the classroom.

Classroom Technology Access Rules:

1. Students should not access other students’ work or use programs to obtain others’ work.
2. Students should have unique passwords to protect their privacy rights.
3. Students should always use citations to credit others for their contributions.
4. Students should not open emails from unknown sources.
5. Students should only access technology with permission from the teacher or at the proper predetermined time.
6. If students have any questions regarding the access of technology they should ask the teacher.

References:

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