

School Law Alert

December 2008

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

The Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act has placed new obligations on elementary and secondary schools receiving discounted internet service in conjunction with the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Services Fund (a program commonly known as the “E-Rate” Program).

Elementary and secondary schools participating in the E-Rate Program are now required to certify that they, as part of their internet safety policy, educate minor students about “appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.”

Districts with schools participating in the E-Rate Program should amend their existing internet safety policy to reflect this new requirement. Affected districts should amend their internet safety and/or use of computer systems policies as quickly as possible, as the E-Rate Program application filing window for the 2009 fiscal year opened on December 2, 2008. The filing window closes on February 12, 2009.

The new legislation amends the Children’s Internet Protection Act, under which schools participating in the E-Rate Program were already required to certify compliance. The Children’s Internet Protection Act had previously required schools to have an internet safety policy.

QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE?

If you have questions about this alert, please contact Julie Fay at (860) 251-5009, Chris Tracey at (860) 251-5626 or Alexis Cole at (203) 324-8155. Procedural safeguard notifications will have to be updated to reflect the parent’s right to withdraw consent, in writing, for the continuation of special education and related services.

This communication is being circulated to Shipman & Goodwin LLP clients and friends. The contents are intended for informational purposes only and are not intended and should not be construed as legal advice. This may be deemed advertising under certain state laws. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. © 2009 Shipman & Goodwin LLP.



SHIPMAN & GOODWIN LLP®

COUNSELORS AT LAW