

Kids need permission slips to use Internet

■ **ACCESS:** Students must pledge not to look at superhighway smut

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just like field trips, thousands of children nationwide need a signed permission slip to take a school-sponsored journey on the Internet. For their part, students must pledge not to dabble in superhighway smut or other noneducational material.

The Education Department estimates that more than half the country's public schools have access to the Internet, a worldwide computer network that is a fountain of educational information and research.

But the Internet also has a seedier side, with risque and extremist material, and some users don't always have a child's best interests at heart.

Proposals to protect children when on line are pending in Congress, but educators already are taking steps themselves. Permission slips are being sent home and educators are writing rules and regulations to foster responsible use of the Internet at school. They're also monitoring school networks for e-mail filled with foul language, or inappropriate files with no relevance to lessons.

"I think it's important for parents to know their student has access," says Linda Henderson, president of an umbrella group of Parent Teacher Associations

in Arlington County, Va. "I think it's also important to put some of the burden of responsible use on the student."

The Arlington County School Board was voting Thursday on a permission slip proposal and a set of network and Internet rules that say, for example, that computer network storage areas can be searched like school lockers.

Other rules would prohibit students from using the network to buy or sell items, use obscene language, or send or display offensive messages or pictures. Students could not use the computers to harass, insult or attack someone. They also would be banned from peeking in their classmates' files, damaging equipment, or violating copyright laws or exchange passwords.

To ensure responsible use of the Internet, some schools are using commercial or in-house programs to block access to inappropriate material, says Linda Roberts, the Education Department's director of educational technology.

Schools should judge Internet sites on their educational merit and not block sections of because of community pressures, says Chris Hansen, senior staff counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union's national office in New York.

"I think the danger here is that schools will rush to overreact," Hansen said.

Benefit: People can bid on items in silent auction

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celebrities asking for donations to the auction.

Just days before the auction, items are still rolling in.

"We started asking for items in February or March," Price said.

When people enter the avionics building/hanger, they will have the opportunity to sign up and get a card with an auction number for making anonymous bids.

During the silent auction, items will have bid sheets with the suggested starting bid and suggested increments for bidding.

For the oral auction, people may hold their card with the number on it in the air to raise a bid. Items maybe picked up at the end of the auction.

The auction is located at the new Lane Community College Avionics Building/Hanger on Airport Road by the Eugene Airport. This will be the first time the building is open to the public since the construction and seven small aviation aircraft will be displayed.

"Even if you don't buy anything, it'll be like visiting a museum," Price said.

The cost is \$5 per individual or family. Doors will open at 2 p.m. The silent auction begins at 3 p.m. and the oral auction begins at 4:40 p.m.

CORRECTION

In the Thursday edition of the ODE, in the story about the Student Senate, the Promise Keepers organization was incorrectly identified as Peace Keepers. The group organized by students is called the Promise Keepers Action Team. The Emerald regrets the error.

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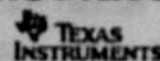
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