WV Executive Branch Privacy Tip



It's hard to believe, but Summer is almost over and it's back to school time! Many schools are now issuing digital devices, and many of them present a serious risk to student privacy. They collect far more information on kids than is necessary, store this information indefinitely, and sometimes even upload it to the cloud automatically. Also, students are provided inadequate privacy policies, or no privacy policy at all!

Here are some tips to help keep students safe:

1. Find out your district's or school's current policies and practices for the device. Ask questions such as:
    a. What applications will students use?
    b. Are you required to authorize a corporation to collect information from your child?
    c. Will this information be used outside the education-focused application?
    d. What are the school's privacy policies for students in general?
    e. What are the privacy policies for the device and applications to be used?
2. Also, are there other terms of service or notice about what is being collected from students and how it is being used? If not, contact the school district for a copy of the contract with the service provider.
3. Learn how to configure the device's privacy and security settings.
4. If you have concerns, there may be other parents who have them also. Meet with them to share issues, and possibly bring these concerns to the district or to a PTO meeting.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation (www.eff.org) has Tips for Parents – a downloadable PDF file with additional information.

Note: Your agency/bureau/department/division may have specific requirements – always check your policies and procedures. If you have questions, contact your Privacy Officer.