Mr. Ken Demers,

My name is Yash Plorer and I am currently attending San Mateo High School as a junior. In the following letter, I request clarification on the *Acceptable Use Policy* or *AUP* of San Mateo Union High School District's *Student Technology Policy*, specifically, the components regarding "filtering."

Since the new *Student Technology Policy* has been released with the *Bring Your Own Device and Wireless Policy* or *BYOD* and its supporting *AUP*, which I believe was for the 2012-2013 school year, I've gained access to educational resources and tools that are available online, and have felt that the definition below has truly been accomplished:

> The electronic communications system is defined as the District's network, servers, computers, mobile devices, peripherals, applications, databases, online, resources, Internet access, email, and any other technology designated for use by students.
> ***AUP***

I'm very thankful that the San Mateo Union High School District provides the electronics communications system and recognize that not all districts in the nation are as privileged as we are. Although I use the system numerous times in a school day, listed below are two specific examples of my use:

A. In my geometry course, my teacher prepared a project in which we would attempt to estimate the height of a flagpole based on angle calculations using trigonometry. To measure angles, she recommended we download an application via the wireless network on our mobile telephones that would measure the degrees of an angle by tilting the device. My team used the tool and successfully estimated the height of the pole.

B. In my English course, my teacher had us read Moby Dick and take notes of the book. To better organize my notes and bookmarks, I downloaded, using the network, an e-book to a device on which I read and took notes about the book. When writing an essay analyzing the book, I was easily able to find the specifiqc quotes and parts of the piece that were significant to my essay due to the organization of the e-book and its notes, highlights, and bookmarks.

Recently, the "filtering technology," has been revised. Due to updates in the filtering of the communications system, I won't be able to accomplish the uses exemplified above when utilizing the SMUHSD's network. Currently, the most significant regression I've noticed to my educational benefits from the communications system's filtering is its blocking of Apple Inc.'s App Store, Apple Inc.'s iTunes University, and Apple Inc.'s iBook Store; in the preceding examples of use of the communications system, I was called to use specifically their services. The following is some information from the *BYOD*, its *AUP* and it's *Frequently Asked Questions* or *FAQ* supplement regarding filtering that I'd like to note:

> [T]he District uses filtering technology and protection measures to restrict access to inappropriate material….
> ***AUP***

> Student filtering is required by federal law of all public schools. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires all network access to be filtered….
> ***FAQ***
>
> Once on the SMUHSD network, all users will have filtered Internet access just as they would on a district owned device.
> ***BYOD***

First, I'd like to note that the last quote cited above is not compliant with the current conditions (therefore the district disrespects its own policy), as all district owned devices that are wired in to the network have access to the Apple Inc.'s App Store, Apple Inc.'s iTunes University, and Apple Inc.'s iBook Store. I completely comprehend and feel that the district network should be filtered "to restrict access to inappropriate material," especially in compliance to the *CIPA*; however, I have trouble understanding why the network filters components such as Apple Inc.'s App Store, Apple Inc.'s iTunes University, or Apple Inc.'s iBook Store. I've read through the Children's Protection Act and note that it mainly regards the filtering of content that is "harmful to minors," which it defines as the following:

> Any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that – (i) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (ii) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (iii) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
> ***CIPA***

The definition doesn't apply to Apple Inc.'s App Store, Apple Inc.'s iTunes University, nor Apple Inc.'s iBook Store; hence my request for clarification of the *AUP*. The two examples mentioned are two of numerous use cases that multiple students and teachers experience that act to improve the methods and techniques of learning and teaching by using the generously provided communications network. The deprivation of this ability only acts to limit the potential and the possibilities of teachers and students to improve their teaching and learning experiences.

I would also like to bring forth that the services of Google's Play Store and Google's Play Book Store are completely accessible on the wireless network. These two networks are complimentary to Apple Inc.'s series and provide similar services.

In response to the above reasons, please explain why the *AUP* filters out Apple Inc.'s App Store and Apple Inc.'s iBook Store. I am very appreciative of the facilities and tools that this district provides, and hope that they may continue to function at their full potential and ability to improve the quality of education provided.

Many thanks for your reading and generosity,

Yash Plorer

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Class of 2015