

# US Supreme Court rejects Internet speech cases

January 17 2012

---



People use the internet at a New York State employment center in 2009 in New York City. The US Supreme Court declined to take two cases involving three separate incidents involving free speech protection for public school students on the Internet.

The US Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to take two cases involving three separate incidents involving free speech protection for public school students on the Internet.

In all three cases students were punished for posting obscene and derogatory information on students or school officials by using their home computers.

In one "cyber-bullying" case, a female high school student in West Virginia was punished for posting crude and insulting information in

2005 about another female student on a fake page on the MySpace social media site.

A US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in July 2011 that officials at Musselman High School could punish the perpetrator without violating her free speech rights because they could reasonably believe that those comments would create a disruption at school.

In a separate case, Blue Mountain School District v. Snyder, two students from Pennsylvania -- one a high-school senior, the other an eighth grader -- were punished for opening parody MySpace profiles of their principals in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

In one fake profile the principal was depicted as a sex-crazed pedophile, while the other that the principal was gay and used drugs.

A federal appeals court in Pennsylvania ruled in June 2011 that the students should not be punished because that interfered with their rights to free speech, because the posted information did not disrupt school activities.

The justices give no reasons when they decline to consider a case.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: US Supreme Court rejects Internet speech cases (2012, January 17) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-01-court-appeals-student-speech-cases.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--