

SUBJECT: USE OF EMAIL IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Electronic mail or email is a valuable business communication tool, and users shall use this tool in a responsible, effective and lawful manner. Every employee/ authorized user has a responsibility to maintain the District's image and reputation, to be knowledgeable about the inherent risks associated with email usage and to avoid placing the School District at risk. Although email seems to be less formal than other written communication, the same laws and business records requirements apply. School District employees/authorized users shall use the District's designated email system for all business email, including emails in which students or student issues are involved.

Employee Acknowledgement

All employees and authorized users shall acknowledge annually and follow the District's policies and regulations on acceptable use of computerized information resources, including email usage.

Classified and Confidential

District employees and authorized users may not:

- a) Provide lists or information about District employees or students to others and/or classified information without approval. Questions regarding usage should be directed to a Principal/supervisor.
- b) Forward emails with confidential, sensitive, or secure information without Principal/supervisor authorization. Additional precautions should be taken when sending documents of a confidential nature.
- c) Use file names that may disclose confidential information. Confidential files should be password protected and encrypted, if possible. File protection passwords shall not be communicated via email correspondence in any event.
- d) Send or forward email with comments or statements about the District that may negatively impact it.

Personal Use

Employees and authorized users may use the District's email system for limited personal use. However, there is no expectation of privacy in email use. Personal use should not include chain letters, junk mail, and jokes. Employees and authorized users shall not use the District's email programs to conduct job searches, fundraising, to post personal information to bulletin boards, blogs, chat groups and list services, etc. without specific permission from the Principal/

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supervisor. The District's email system shall not be used for personal gain or profit or gambling, including sports pools, or other such activities.

Email Accounts

All email accounts on the District's system are the property of the School District. Employees and authorized users may access other email account(s) or system (Yahoo, Hotmail, AOL, etc.) via the District's network. Personal accounts and instant messaging shall not be used to conduct official business. Employees accept all responsibility for its maintenance and liability for damage to District property, system or data. No expectation of privacy may be assumed if using the District system to access personal email accounts. Excessive use of personal email may result in disciplinary action.

Receiving Unacceptable Mail

Employees and authorized users who receive offensive, unpleasant, harassing or intimidating messages via email or instant messaging shall inform their Principal/supervisor immediately.

Records Management and Retention

Retention of email messages are covered by the same retention schedules as records in other formats, but are of a similar program function or activity. Email shall be maintained in accordance with the NYS Records Retention and Disposition Schedule ED-1 and as outlined in the Records Management Policy. Email records may consequently be deleted, purged or destroyed after they have been retained for the requisite time period established in the ED-1 schedule.

All email sent and received to an employee's email account should be archived by the District for a period of no more than six (6) months.

Training

Employees/authorized users should receive regular training on the following topics:

- a) The appropriate use of email with students, parents and other staff to avoid issues of harassment and/or charges of fraternization.
- b) Confidentiality of emails.
- c) Permanence of email: email is never truly deleted, as the data can reside in many different places and in many different forms.

POLICY

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Personnel

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- d) No expectation of privacy: email use on District property is NOT to be construed as private.

Sanctions

The Network Coordinator staff or Superintendent's designee will immediately report to the Superintendent or Building level administrator if inappropriate use of email is suspected or noted. The Superintendent/Principal will take appropriate action. Violations may result in a loss of email use, access to the technology network and/or other disciplinary action. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Notification

All employees/authorized users will be required to access a copy of the District's policies on staff and student use of computerized information resources and the regulations established in connection with those policies. Each user will acknowledge this employee/designated user agreement before establishing an account or continuing in his/her use of email.

Confidentiality Notice

A standard Confidentiality Notice will automatically be added to each email as determined by the District.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #3320 -- Confidentiality of Computerized Information
#6122 -- Anti-Harassment in the School District
#5670 -- Records Management
#6470 -- Staff Use of Computerized Information Resources

Adopted: July 13, 2011