

EMPLOYEE E-MAIL PROCEDURES

General Guidelines

When sending important information, don't assume your recipient will read it immediately. E-mail is best used for sending information that can be digested by readers at their convenience, and should not be used for same-day meeting notices and other urgent business. The telephone is the preferred communication mechanism for urgent information.

Use judgment in distributing large enclosures. Huge documents tax the system and can disrupt the operation of the recipients' accounts. Sometimes a paper copy still makes more sense, even if it requires more effort to distribute.

Don't use enclosed documents for very-short messages. Type short messages in the body of the email. Document enclosures take time to open and read, and they occupy space on the system or the recipients' hard drive – so they should be sent sparingly.

Sending Messages

Don't use the REPLY ALL function unless every person on the original list really needs to see your response. A response to the sender is often sufficient.

Don't send messages just to say "thanks," "o.k." and things of that nature.

The Subject

It is an excellent practice to label your message's title with one of the following categories: "For Action," "Response to Action" or "Information Only." This will allow recipients to scan their messages and rapidly determine if you are seeking guidance and/or timely action, as opposed to communication for informational purposes. The CC (carbon copy) address is informational by definition.

Be descriptive in the subject title. The subject should summarize the point of the message. This will also assist your reader in locating your message quickly in his or her inbox.

Don't make the title too long. Long titles are not fully visible when mail is delivered and may cause confusion. On the other hand, mail sent with no title may be treated as junk mail.

The Body of the Message

Be direct, and get right to the point. Many people receive dozens of e-mail messages daily and will be grateful if you say what you need to say with few words. An e-mail message should look more like a telegram than a doctoral dissertation.

Choose your words carefully. E-mail has a tendency to be misunderstood more than other written forms of communication. Your sarcasm, humor or seriousness may be misinterpreted in the flatness of the e-mail message. If you want to convey emotion or strong convictions, it is probably better to say it in person or use the telephone. In general, observe good “e-mail etiquette.” For example, **MESSAGES WRITTEN IN ALL CAPS ARE OFTEN CONSIDERED RUDE** by the reader.

Use new paragraphs to show a change of direction in thought. Don’t use long paragraphs. It makes the message hard to read and it’s tough for the reader to find the key points inside a huge mountain of text.

Separate paragraphs with a blank line. This makes the whole message easier to read.

Never put anything in an e-mail message that you wouldn’t put in a memo. Inappropriate remarks, district gossip, and other unsavory or controversial subjects that end up in e-mail can hurt both the district and employees. E-mail can be forwarded and can travel anywhere inside or outside the district. It is backed up and can be restored either inside or outside the district, even after being deleted. E-mail becomes a written record that can be used in a court of law. Be professional and careful in what you say to and about others.

Check your message before sending. Always check your spelling and grammar. Our e-mail system provides a spell checker. *You can make a poor impression very quickly by sending out a note with bad grammar and/or misspelled words.*

ADDITIONAL E-MAIL INFORMATION

The district e-mail network is provided for school use. It is inappropriate and against district policy to use the system to send jokes, information pertaining to non-school related activities, personal advertisements, chain letters, and political opinions, etc. Use of the system for jokes or inter-office banter may seem like a small matter, but the net loss in productivity can be high when repeated or multiplied across the district.

Always delete unknown e-mail attachments before opening them. They can contain destructive viruses.

Don't forget to delete unneeded messages and otherwise "clean" your account periodically. It will improve the functionality of your account, especially if people have sent you presentations and or other large document packages.

E-mail messages for lists or "all campus" should be made to the appropriate administrator. Make your request to your administrator if you would like to send a campus wide message.

Use the e-mail file management options to help sort incoming mail. You can probably improve your handling of received messages by learning to use the available options for customizing your inbox.

Remember, there is an electronic record of everything you create on e-mail, whether you delete it or not. All district e-mail is covered by the Open Records Act and can be requested by outside individuals.

Note: Additions to the e-mail procedures may occur to align with ever changing technological advances.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact the Technology Department.